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FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

5th
PLENARY MEETING

Monday, 27 September 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 127

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/48/414/Add.2)

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the item on our agenda for this meeting, I should like to draw the General Assembly's attention to document A/48/414/Add.2.

In his letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs me that since the issuance of his communications dated 21 and 24 September 1993 Guinea-Bissau has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

ADDRESS BY MR. ALFREDO FELIX CRISTIANI-BURKARD, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of El Salvador.

Mr. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard, the President of the Republic of El Salvador, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President CRISTIANI-BURKARD *(interpretation from Spanish)*: It is a great pleasure for us to salute your unanimous election, Sir, to preside over the General Assembly's work at its forty-eighth session, especially since you are a worthy representative of a sister country of our region of Latin America and the Caribbean. Your opening address, in which you presented your vision of the world, was rich in ideas and insights into international reality. You urged that we commit ourselves to promoting the purposes and principles of the Charter in order to achieve a better world, and you encouraged us to reflect on our responsibilities as we strive to meet the global challenges facing our peoples. Your address demonstrated your sensitivity and wisdom, which, added to your political and diplomatic experience in multilateralism, will help us move forward to change as we endeavour to achieve the objectives of our Organization.

We should also like to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, the former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, for the successful manner in which he guided the work of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly and in particular for his efforts to bring about the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations system.

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ENGLISH

We also wish to join in the expressions of appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedication and hard work in leading our Organization. We once again express our support for and confidence in him in his difficult task of seeking international peace and security.

For the fifth year in a row we have come to this highest international forum, from which it has been our privilege to give annual testimony to the progress of a process that, though it is unfolding in a small developing country, represents one of the most complex and exemplary dynamic forces for peace in modern history.

In 1989, when we first came to speak to the world's representatives from this rostrum, the case of El Salvador was just one more knot in the tangled web of problems left behind by the sadly notorious cold war as it began unexpectedly to wind down. A few months earlier, we had just taken the reins of government with a great purpose born in the deepest part of our conscience: to do all that was humanly possible to find a political solution to the Salvadorean conflict. That is how we expressed ourselves, with a solemn promise, to the Salvadorean people on the first day of our Government. We reaffirmed it before the United Nations in September of that crucial year of 1989, only a few weeks before the world witnessed the almost unbelievable dissolution of one of the greatest ideological-military Powers on Earth. This led to a new era - difficult, but also hopeful and promising, for all.

If we wish sincerely to interpret the history of our country, we must say that the peace process in El Salvador was a search along various avenues that had been present in the lives of the people of El Salvador ever since our nation was born. Our peace process is not a mere expression of the need to find a sensible and reasonable end to an unjust and painful war. In El Salvador, as in so many other countries with a historical development similar to ours, peace is the generic name for age-old needs and aspirations, such as those for democracy, democratic institutions, the rule of law, political freedoms and rights - in a word, the victory of civilization over barbarism.

This helped us to understand, as our work for peace began, that it must be solid and enduring. Otherwise, we would be making just another effort - like so many in our past - that would not rise above superficial means or lay the true foundations of the country's political, social and economic modernization. For us - and this is the aspect that has enabled our process to succeed - peace is synonymous with democracy.

We in El Salvador have been delighted to learn that, from varying perspectives of ideological and political thought, our peace process is considered exemplary. In this forum of nations, we should like to point to some of the factors that, in our opinion, have allowed us to set that example.

First of all, we believe that the solution achieved is strictly in keeping with the nature of the conflict. Given that it was a conflict with historical and social roots, its eruption was eminently political, linked to the inadequacy and dysfunctioning of the traditional Salvadorean political system and the political-ideological confrontation of the super-Powers. The solution had to be political, without winners or losers, and to aim at the creation of a new scenario involving a system of pluralistic participation. The peace agreement is a plan of commitments to expanding, developing and guaranteeing democracy in El Salvador. That was what we needed. That is why it was implemented in an irreversible manner, despite momentary problems that were merely mishaps along the way.

Secondly, the conflict led to violent confrontation in the country. The exhaustion from the war and the impetus towards a process of democratization created the conditions for the emergence in El Salvador of a culture of tolerance, understanding and reconciliation - in a word, a culture of peace. This concept has not emerged in El Salvador alone; it is a growing concern throughout the world. With the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, we are striving to promote a culture of peace, for which we appeal for the firm support of the international community. Without a culture of peace, which will help to remove the ever-active remnants of the culture of violence, it will be impossible to establish the new world order demanded by our times, a new moral order between men and nations as the foundation for this new world order of competitive but respectful and harmonious coexistence, which we can glimpse as an achievable reality as we pass into the new millennium.

Thirdly, we must recognize that the peace process in El Salvador was continually and effectively followed by the international community, represented by the Security Council and the Secretary-General of this great world Organization, by a group of countries that had close ties to the situation in El Salvador in a variety of ways, and by a widespread general interest in observing the ways and means used to resolve a conflict such as the one that afflicted El Salvador for such a long time. We have no doubt that without this international attention a solution to

the problem in El Salvador would have been much more difficult and complicated.

El Salvador is a living example of how the transition from a world dominated by a confrontational bipolarity to one determined by the logic of specific situations is taking place. We do not doubt for one instant that the engine of the world process is changing: from abusive and heartless ideology to pragmatic and ordered rationality. There have always been many problems and conflicts in the world, but for a long time the international drama seemed to be an increasingly absorbing confrontation of ideologies. This distortion, aggravated by the real problems that existed, impeded their solution. It is true that since the cold war painful and cruel situations have erupted, such as the one now experienced in the former Yugoslavia. But ideological, strategic and geopolitical bipolarity artificially created some conflicts and stifled others, also artificially. Reality is, of course, a better guide than all the fantasies of the ideologies.

We in El Salvador do not speak of these matters with the tranquillity of analysts or the scientific patience of academicians. We speak of war because we have physically endured it. We speak of the worldwide ideological confrontation because, during what we now know was its last phase, El Salvador was one of its most intense battlegrounds. And we also speak of peace because we are building peace on the basis of an agreement of great institutional significance, conceived and structured to strengthen democracy in El Salvador and throughout Central America.

We have already expressed what this peace means to us. And now we would like to emphasize that we are well aware that peace is a process. Being a process, it cannot be static, but must evolve. In this as well, El Salvador sets an example. Countries such as ours were for long caught up in the struggle between authoritarian stagnation and revolutionary radicalism. This is a pivotal moment in history, because it is giving us all a lesson in the pre-eminence of an ancient but under-valued concept: evolution. "Everything changes," said the pre-Socratic philosopher. But the natural rhythm of that change has always been a kind of historical riddle. With many certainties remaining, and in the healthy absence of the magical formulas that have so tormented the world during our century, we are perhaps on the way to understanding that the natural rhythm of change can also be summed in another classic phrase: "Without hurrying, but without pausing."

With evolution as our guide once again, we have no reason to hurry. The rhythm of transformation occurs in a way that cannot be resisted. We see this in the changing international, political and economic relations of our time. An almost spontaneous restructuring has followed the removal of so many straitjackets. And this restructuring has brought to light what has always been most important: the real problems. As the East-West conflict has disappeared, almost no one speaks about the North-South conflict or alternative alignments, but the serious problems of inequality, critical poverty and dependence have not been resolved. They are still with us. And they are a challenge for this new order which we are trying to create on a more rational and reasonable foundation.

In this new scenario, the United Nations has a central role which was until recently unimaginable. The great dynamic of universal peace cannot be led by a single country, nor even by a privileged group of countries. The cooperation, understanding and support of all countries is needed, as is an instrument which will make peace processes viable and monitor and support them. That instrument is this Organization, and this special dimension of its work has expanded and been emphasized in recent years. El Salvador has the honour to have been one of the first countries to benefit from the new United Nations system of peace-keeping efforts. All the work of active mediation and then active monitoring - unprecedented in international law - which the United Nations has been putting into practice in El Salvador, is not some theoretical artifice, but an exercise derived from the necessities of a real situation. The dynamic of the Salvadorian process has shaped the role of the United Nations in our country. We Salvadorians have learned much from our close relation with the world Organization, and we are sure that it too has learned very important lessons from its continuing participation in the achievement, maintenance and development of peace in El Salvador.

Our view of the United Nations has been enriched as we have shared with the world Organization the responsibility of carrying out the peace plan in El Salvador. Thus we understand more clearly that the United Nations is also evolving. Its original form was a product of the end of the Second World War; it must now open itself up to new realities. Organs, such as the Security Council, and even the Secretary-General now have roles and responsibilities which demand changes. The composition of the Council and the veto mechanism within it, which were a result of the deep mutual distrust of the post-war period, must be fundamentally revised to adopt them to times of cooperation and exchange. The

Secretary-General's field of activity should also be reconsidered, because there is far more executive work to be done today than in the past. All these are unavoidable challenges that now face the Organization, to which we owe so much and which we wish to see ever stronger and more efficient.

The United Nations has room for the whole world. In successive addresses here, we have emphasized the importance of the principle of universality. We understand that this principle cannot in any way provide a means of interfering in the internal affairs of States; at the same time we believe that there are realities of today's world that cannot be disregarded. We have therefore supported consideration of exceptional situations, in keeping with the experience with parallel representation of divided countries at the United Nations. It should be possible to resolve this matter within the framework of understanding and openness that now characterizes international relations.

El Salvador, for the first time in its history, is in the vigorous mainstream of modernization, a dynamic that concerns all countries during these times of change. Our contribution cannot be material, because we lack resources and wealth, but we have earned the capacity to speak with the moral force of a people raising itself up from its own rubble with the unexpected serenity that results from prolonged suffering. If we in El Salvador can testify to anything, we can testify that it is possible to move from irrationality to the deliberate construction of historical rationality. In proceeding along this long path we need the international community's political, moral and financial support, in keeping with the resolution that the General Assembly adopted last year for the reconstruction and development of El Salvador.

We must reincorporate ex-combatants in institutional and productive life through programmes such as the transfer of land for farming. Also, there are many new institutions emerging in our country, such as the civilian national police, which is one of the most ambitious experiments in public security in the world. We need timely technical and economic support to build the structures of peace more swiftly. We would like to be able to wipe from our minds the discouraging evidence that it is easier to find the money for war than for peace. The culture of peace - which is a world-wide challenge - must also become evident in this fundamental change in priorities.

We are here for the last time because our presidential mandate comes to an end on 1 June 1994. It has been an immense honour for us to come here every year to report on the progress in a process that is of such great concern to the people of El Salvador, and yet is also of such concern to Central America and the international community because of its positive effects on regional stability.

The country that we are talking about today is very different from the one that we were discussing in 1989, and the important thing is that what is surprising in the difference is how positive and how full of hope it is. The credit is not ours. We did our work and exercised our will. The credit goes to a people that, from being a footnote to history, has won, by dint of sacrifice, a place of honour in this changing scene that we are seeing emerge at this close of the century.

All the political and social forces in El Salvador have worked together to bring about the emergence of the new country. The friendly countries that are closest to us by reason of history and geography can testify to this. We have made a successful effort to bring order to our economy, and we are laying the foundations for the continued constructive advance of full democracy - political, economic, social and cultural.

El Salvador expresses its concern over the continued existence of conflicts that are devastating some parts of the world. The tragic cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Somalia cause us great distress. However, we have confidence in the force of reason, which always finds a way to achieve even the most difficult goals.

And there is good news too, such as the extraordinarily important agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has thrilled the world. We have also seen an opening up in South Africa for reason to prevail, and the situation in Haiti becoming clear, albeit with difficulty. All that gives us comfort, and reminds us that we are in a period of enormous surprises. The world is ridding itself of many oppressive spectres, and this gives us the strength to believe in the great potential of the international system.

If we had to prepare a list of all those to whom we would give thanks for their contribution to peace in El Salvador, we would always leave out a few, but we cannot fail to mention the extraordinary work carried out both by the previous Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and the present Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and also their body of collaborators and advisers, without whose participation and

support it is unlikely that we would have achieved the goal of putting El Salvador on the road towards genuine peace. The Security Council has always been very mindful of the peace process in our country, and the Council's active even-handedness also deserves our highest praise.

On behalf of El Salvador, I give thanks to everyone. El Salvador is a living example. We hope that we will continue to be an example of stability, respect for human rights, national concord and progress. We therefore call on the world to give us its attention and support, and, most of all, we ask God to shed his light on El Salvador, on the United Nations and on all men and women of good faith on this Earth of ours, which is a common inheritance that must be shared by all mankind.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of El Salvador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. JOAQUIM ALBERTO CHISSANO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Mozambique.

Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Mozambique, His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President CHISSANO: It is with satisfaction that my delegation and I would like to congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally, on his election as President of the forty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I wish him success in discharging his duties. My delegation is available and ready to cooperate with him in the task of ensuring a successful conclusion to this session's deliberations.

To His Excellency Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria we extend our congratulations on the wonderful work he did as President of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

I should like to take this opportunity to address my special appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of our Organization, for his unflinching dedication in the search for solutions to the many problems that affect humankind. I wish to reiterate our gratitude and appreciation for his personal commitment and dedication to the cause of peace and stability in my country.

To the new Member States which have just joined this great United Nations family we express our congratulations and our readiness to work with them to fulfil the objectives enshrined in the Charter of the Organization.

When I last addressed the Assembly, in 1990, I had the opportunity to say that my Government had begun direct negotiations with RENAMO with a view to putting an end to the long war of destruction and destabilization.

For my Government the dialogue had as it main objective - besides ending the war - to restore peace, normalize life and promote understanding among all citizens of Mozambique. These conditions are essential if the process of national reconstruction is to gain root and prosper.

It is worth indicating here that, for reasons alien to the Government, the dialogue with RENAMO was complex and too long. We wish to express our appreciation and thanks to the international community for its unwavering support, which helped us to conclude the negotiations successfully and sign the General Peace Agreement in Rome on 4 October 1992.

For Mozambique the signing of the General Peace Agreement represents an important step in the life of its people. With it, hopes for the Mozambicans to rebuild their country in a peaceful and harmonious environment were renewed. The fact that almost one year has elapsed without any major breach of the cease-fire is reason for joy.

We are witnessing the revival of economic and social activity in the country. The refugees have begun to return. Displaced people are resettling in their areas of origin or in other areas of their choice. The reconstruction of roads, bridges, schools and health centres is under way in spite of

the shortage of financial and material resources with which the country is confronted.

The flow of people and goods is increasing as the roads are reopening to traffic. We are witnessing a normal movement of people all over the country, except in RENAMO-occupied areas. There is a growing interest on the part of foreigners in seeking investment opportunities in Mozambique.

The challenges ahead of us are enormous. The war of destabilization that ravaged the country for more than 16 years has caused economic and social damage amounting to about $20 billion. As a direct consequence of this war, 6 million people were displaced or became refugees in neighbouring countries; more than 500,000 children became orphans and an equal number were traumatized. In addition to this, 3000 primary schools and about 1000 health centres were destroyed in rural areas. Together with this, power lines, sugar plants, tea factories - among others - bridges and mines were destroyed.

Many agricultural and industrial activities of primary importance were paralysed, thus reducing considerably our capacity to export. Unemployment was aggravated. These are the problems we are endeavouring to solve as we proceed with the implementation of the General Peace Agreement. The demobilization of forces and their economic and social reintegration require a tremendous effort on our part. As can be seen, these challenges cannot be met successfully without the support of the Assembly.

The Government of Mozambique has approved a national reconstruction plan the main objective of which is to reactivate the economic and social life of the population so that people may go from a situation in which they survive on emergency aid to one of rehabilitation and sustained development. Thus, the aim of the plan is to put an end to the structural poverty of the population by giving it the means it needs to relaunch productive activity and to become self-sufficient. We believe that in the medium term this plan will contribute to a rapid expansion of essential services in rural areas as well as to that of overall economic and social activity in the country in general.

On humanitarian assistance, it is worth noting that with the support of the United Nations we drew up a consolidated programme for action in the repatriation process, demobilization of military units, supply of emergency aid, re-establishment of essential services, and institutional capacity-building in the country. Humanitarian assistance will be required for some years to come until the whole process of resettlement of the population is completed.

In spite of these challenges the Government has proceeded with the implementation of the economic recovery programme, with the assistance of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Economic Community (EEC) and other partners. After a decline in the gross domestic product last year we expect a slight growth of about 4 per cent this year thanks to peace and the good climatic conditions we are enjoying in the country.

We are convinced that the success of present efforts and of the large national reconstruction plan will, to a great extent, depend on the creative spirit, determination and hard work of all Mozambicans. On the other hand, the success of this same project will also depend on the generous support of the international community.

We appeal to our partners to provide timely assistance, inasmuch as the delays we are observing in delivering assistance already committed have, in many cases, been partly responsible for the weak performance of the economy, particularly in the industrial sector.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize and express our thanks to the United Nations, and to all those countries that have contributed funds, resources and personnel to the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ). We equally thank them and the many non-governmental organizations that have been operating in the country for their assistance in successfully meeting these challenges.

We have spoken about encouraging developments in Mozambique. However, we regret to say that the other face of the situation in the country is a source of serious concern.

After the international community succeeded in catching up with the initial delay in setting up the UNOMOZ operation, RENAMO found new pretexts to further protract and delay the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In its dilatory manoeuvres RENAMO is moving from precondition to precondition, though many of the preconditions have nothing to do with the General Peace Agreement or are a blatant breach of it.

From the very inception, RENAMO delayed sending personnel to fill its positions in the commissions for the implementation of the General Peace Agreement. At

present, RENAMO is stating reservations concerning Security Council resolution 863 (1993) on Mozambique, to which my Government fully subscribes. As members know, that resolution calls, among other things, for urgent implementation, without further preconditions, of the process of assembly and demobilization of forces and of beginning the training of the new army.

On the consultations for the adoption of the draft electoral law, RENAMO is raising difficulties that can hardly be understood, particularly with respect to the composition of the National Electoral Commission. The organization and holding of multiparty elections is a Government responsibility. The Government cannot excuse itself from that responsibility at a moment when the Mozambicans and the international community as a whole are anxiously waiting to see the free and fair multiparty elections that are to be held not later than October 1994. We cannot postpone the elections indefinitely. RENAMO must be made to understand this. The Government will continue to engage in consultations, and will spare no effort to make sure that the elections are held at the proper time.

The overview we have just presented compels us to make some observations on the situation in Angola and South Africa, given the affinities of the regional situation as a whole. We are deeply concerned over the resumption of hostilities in Angola because they not only represent a serious threat to peace and to the future of the country but also threaten to perpetuate tension and instability in the whole region of southern Africa.

We continue to believe that compliance with the Bicesse Accords, respect for the election results and the unconditional implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions constitute a valid platform in the efforts towards a lasting peace in Angola. We are hopeful that dialogue will prevail in the search for the best solutions to the conflict in Angola.

Within that context, my Government fully subscribes to Security Council resolution 864 (1993). Strict observance of the spirit and letter of that resolution by UNITA is a fundamental condition for an end to the protracted and devastating war which is responsible for the great suffering of the Angolan people today. We also believe that compliance with that resolution will certainly lead to humanitarian assistance being channelled to the people in greatest need. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my Government's readiness to cooperate with the United Nations in the implementation of that resolution.

We have followed with great interest the talks within the framework of the Multiparty Negotiating Forum in South Africa. We would like to commend the decision taken by that organ, specifically regarding the creation of the Transitional Executive Council soon to be established as a decisive step in preparing for the first multiracial elections in the country's history.

The end of the apartheid system and the formation of a democratically elected Government will greatly contribute to peace and stability in the region, thus enhancing the prospects for even more prosperous economic cooperation within the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The peoples of southern Africa have high hopes for that organization of regional economic integration as a special forum for harmonizing their economic and social development programmes. The region possesses enormous economic potential yet to be explored, and continues to call for investment in order to become a viable, more competitive economic partner in the international arena.

On the Middle East, we welcome the signing of the agreement between the Israeli Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington on 13 September 1993. This agreement constitutes a historic and important landmark on the road to the solution of the issues in the Middle East conflict.

The question of East Timor, whose people shared with Mozambique a common colonial history, remains unresolved. We encourage the ongoing dialogue between Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the Secretary-General, aimed at finding a solution that will safeguard the right of the Maubère people to self-determination.

We are also convinced that, through dialogue, the other conflicts still prevailing in Africa and other continents will come to satisfactory solutions.

The world economy continues to be characterized by stagnant growth with an increasing disparity in development levels. Various factors on the international scene led to this state of affairs. External debt constitutes one of the main obstacles to the economic growth of developing countries. The external debt burden is aggravated by the deteriorating prices of basic export goods and by weak foreign investment in productive areas which could have a positive impact on the balance of

payments and on domestic savings. We believe, therefore, that the international community should pay special attention to the external debt of the developing countries and take necessary, adequate measures aimed at finding a definitive solution to this crisis.

Moreover, we have noted a decline in financial assistance to the developing countries; such assistance is being diverted to other countries, in Europe, at the very time when we are experiencing a reduction in the flow of official development assistance. This affects the economies of low-income countries.

Notwithstanding the enormous efforts undertaken in the structural-adjustment process during the last decade, the economic and social situation in Africa remains very serious. The real economic growth rate in African countries remains far behind the population growth rates. Per capita income and other development factors continue to decrease, and remain among the lowest in the world.

If the alarming economic situation I have described is not addressed by the international community, and reversed, the peace dividends resulting from the end of the cold war and from the progress of the democratic process world wide will not benefit all the peoples of the world.

It is in this context that we support the efforts to produce a solid consensus on a development agenda to the benefit during this session of the General Assembly.

We also believe that a speedy conclusion of the Uruguay Round of negotiations would contribute to a solution of the problems relating to international trade that affect the world economy.

With regard to environment, the Republic of Mozambique has established a National Commission for Environment to look after issues in this area. The implementation of "Agenda 21" in Mozambique has a legal basis within the Republic's Constitution, which contains provisions relating to the management of natural resources and environment in general. The National Commission for Environment is at present working on harmonizing measures aimed at integrating environmental aspects into economic and social programmes, and it is also producing a National Plan for Environment Management, whose main objective is the promotion of the country's sustained development. In order to fulfil international obligations in this regard, Mozambique is making the necessary preparations to adhere to the main international Conventions and other agreements on environment.

A brief appreciation of the international situation shows that the era of bipolarity has given way to the beginning of an era characterized by dialogue in international cooperation, particularly in joint efforts to face the problems affecting peace, international security and economic and social development.

Solving the problems we face today requires the promotion of cooperative relations, based on interdependence, complementarity and mutual benefit between nations.

In various parts of the world significant steps have been taken bearing testimony to the prevailing political will for, and commitment to, political, economic and social democratization. However, these efforts are faced with social problems deriving from the institutional and economic fragility of the States involved. It is therefore imperative that the international community take cognizance of these difficulties and adopt measures in support of those efforts.

The new challenges we are facing today lead us to believe even more in the United Nations as the most privileged forum for harmonizing the global interests of all peoples of the world, with the aim of fostering an international environment in conformity with the noble principles and objectives enshrined in its Charter.

In conclusion, I should like to highlight the importance of peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance in the world, and especially in my own country. In this regard I appeal to Member States to redirect their efforts and resources in order to strengthen further the United Nations.

To this end, we should like to appeal to all Member States to channel material and financial resources to the United Nations so that its role as the guardian of international peace and security may continue to be strengthened.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Mozambique for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda Item 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY HIS SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT, CROWN PRINCE OF MONACO

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco.

His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

CROWN PRINCE ALBERT *(interpretation from French)*: For me this is a very special occasion, for it is the first time I address, on behalf of my father, the Sovereign Prince of Monaco, and on behalf of my country, this prestigious world Assembly of the States Members of the United Nations.

I wish to tell members of the tremendous joy of all Monégasques and inhabitants of the Principality of Monaco when my country joined this great world Organization. I should like to take the opportunity once again to thank the members of the Security Council and of the General Assembly for their favourable consideration of Monaco's application for membership of the Organization.

I wish the Assembly every success in its work. A number of its agenda items are of particularly vital historic and political significance. The decisions we take will undoubtedly have far-reaching and long-term consequences for the future of the world community.

I wish also, to congratulate you, Sir, very sincerely and warmly on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. My congratulations also go to the members of the General Committee. I have no doubt that your skill and lengthy experience will enable our work to proceed under the best possible conditions.

Like all countries that put their trust in international law and cooperation, the Principality of Monaco, in its relations with other countries, has always relied on respect for international norms and documents.

Its Princes have always been fully aware of the fact that the maintenance of peace necessarily entails respect for the sovereignty of States and the development of friendly relations among peoples.

Prince Albert I of Monaco, when he created the Peace Institute at the end of the last century, was even then inspired by that philosophy, which led to the founding, in 1919, of the League of Nations and, in 1945, of the United Nations. On 5 February 1934 Prince Albert's successor - Prince Louis II, who was profoundly touched by the hardship and suffering caused by the First World War - set up the Medical-Legal Commission of Monaco, whose sober reflection and work which continue today, gave inspiration to the drawing up of the 1949 Geneva Conventions of the International Red Cross.

My country's commitment to peace is therefore a tradition of more than 100 years - a tradition observed by its Princes, whose dynasty will shortly celebrate its 700th anniversary. It is also a political aspiration that has only grown in strength with the passage of time. It will always be adhered to with both conviction and determination in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

In this spirit, I should like to refer in particular to a resolution of the International Olympic Committee, of which I am a member, which unanimously recommends observance of a long-standing tradition of the Olympic movement - the principle of the Olympic truce.

The Government of Monaco supports this initiative, which was signed and endorsed by the National Committees of 184 countries and was officially addressed to our Secretary-General on 9 February this year. An international year of sport and the Olympic spirit would undoubtedly afford an opportunity to launch this project.

Perhaps it is by constantly repeating certain initiatives of this nature - albeit modest ones - that we shall be able gradually to create the just and lasting peace to which we all so deeply aspire.

Did we not, a few days ago, receive from the southern shores of the Mediterranean news giving us immense hope of peace? Though it may be tenuous, we are at one with those who inspired it and with those who are today endeavouring to make it a success. It is our earnest wish that they will succeed.

Peace is not just the silence of guns. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the establishment of genuine peace

can flow only from greater respect for justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms. For this very reason, the work and the conclusions of the Vienna Conference on human rights warrants our very close scrutiny.

Finally, echoing a wish expressed by my father, Prince Rainier III, when he addressed the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, I should like to emphasize that the Government of Monaco has set for itself the priority of protecting our environment, both natural and cultural, so that it may provide a healthy, enriching and balanced life for all. The Principality has undertaken major efforts to combat, in particular, all types of pollution that attack and contaminate the Mediterranean.

My country is more than ever resolved to encourage all initiatives in this area, including the establishment, on its own soil, of institutions dealing with coordination and the adoption of a General Assembly resolution that would proclaim 1998 the international year of the seas and oceans.

I should like, in conclusion, to reiterate that the Principality of Monaco - in full respect for the rule of law in domestic affairs and for treaties and law in the international order; having neither armed forces nor military arsenals; and bearing no enmity to anyone at all - is fully prepared to assist the Organization in all its actions, undertaken sometimes with great difficulty, aimed at maintaining and rebuilding peace.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to thank His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco for the statement he has just made.

His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It gives me pleasure to convey to you, Sir, and to your friendly country my sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. I wish you every success in carrying out your responsibilities in light of the current developments and changes in the international situation.

On this occasion, I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the constructive efforts he made and the positive role he played as the President of the past session.

Since the end of the cold war, reference has been made to a new age. The implications of this have given rise, not only to hopes and aspirations, but also to caution and apprehension. Although there was overall satisfaction that the era of confrontation, the arms race and polarization had come to an end, and while there was cause for hope that an era of justice, cooperation and disarmament was about to dawn, there has been grave concern over the great injustices that we have witnessed in Bosnia; over the attempt at political suicide in Somalia; over the illogical and irrational wars in many parts of the world; and over the multiple criteria used in addressing various problems.

Side by side with concern, there has been increasing despair and frustration over the continued deterioration of economic conditions in most developing countries, particularly in Africa. It must be acknowledged, however, that international developments, judged fairly and considered closely, are still in flux, and that the world situation is still dynamic. We truly hope that such dynamism is moving towards the strengthening of the positive factors and the rectification of the negative ones, in order that the political outlook worldwide might change and that everyone might embrace the new world order with satisfaction and a will to participate rather than with despair and frustration.

Fortunately, this session begins amid increasing feelings of optimism in view of the ongoing progress towards a just solution to the question of Palestine and of the steady progress towards a solution to the problem of South Africa.

At the Israeli-Palestinian level, a major step has been taken through mutual recognition by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. This means mutual recognition by the two peoples of each other and mutual acceptance of the idea of coexistence with one another. This also opens the door to serious and substantive negotiations which would provide an unprecedented opportunity to achieve a just settlement to the problem that has cast its shadow on the Middle East - indeed, on the whole world - since the end of the Second World War.

If what has been achieved represents the first step towards such a settlement, it will undoubtedly lead to the establishment of a positive relationship that would deal with issues such as withdrawal, self-determination and refugees until the historic and comprehensive settlement between Israel, Palestine and the Arabs is finalized. This may be the real meaning behind the statement of the Israeli Prime Minister at the signing ceremony in Washington,

D.C., when he said: "Enough", and when he said that the time for peace has come; and also of President Yasser Arafat's statement that the Palestine Liberation Organization has turned a new leaf in its relations with Israel. And God bless the memory of the late President Anwar El-Sadat, who said: "No more wars".

Sixteen years ago, Egypt made a breakthrough towards the outer reaches of the future and shook off the shackles of the status quo by realizing that wars neither create peace nor resolve conflicts and that only reason and dialogue provide the effective means of tackling problems, no matter how insurmountable or intractable they may seem. Peace was therefore initiated by Egypt, a peace founded on the solid foundation of respect for international legality and on the resultant responsibilities in a balanced manner that ensures justice for all.

The peace process initiated at the Madrid Conference in October 1991 is now bearing fruit after unrelenting efforts, and we are encouraged by the initial outcome we saw recently on both the Palestinian-Israeli and the Jordanian-Israeli tracks and look forward to similar results on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Both countries rightly call for complete withdrawal from their territories within a context based objectively on the principle of land for peace.

In order to put an end to the legacy of wars and enmity, Egypt, which has devoted a substantial part of its efforts to Middle East issues, calls upon all the peoples of the region to look to the future and to reflect upon our relations in the period following the settlement of the conflict. It calls on them to reflect upon the future of the region and its development to ensure optimum utilization of the ample expertise available and optimal investment of the rich human resources at our disposal and of the valuable natural resources with which it has been endowed.

Egypt calls on these peoples to reflect upon the most suitable social contract for our region so that they might maintain their respective unique, intrinsic characteristics and achieve harmony and integration among the region's common elements, so that social and cultural stability may prevail and the region may achieve comprehensive cultural integration in a genuine era of comprehensive integral peace.

Finally, Egypt calls on the peoples of the region to develop a system of relations based on equal security, the non-use of force, a balance of armaments and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in a context of transparency and peaceful relations.

In the same vein, Egypt calls on all States in the Middle East, and particularly on Israel, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to take the necessary practical measures to prohibit and renounce the possession, the use or the threat of use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons so that the Middle East may become a zone free of these weapons as called for in President Hosni Mubarak's initiative of April 1990. We consider this to be an indispensable prerequisite for security and stability in the Middle East.

Mr. WALOSOWICZ (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Side by side with the considerable optimism generated by what has been achieved in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, there has been progress in another area, that for far too long has been a hotbed of serious historical and international conflict, namely, the conflict in South Africa, between a people calling for its rights to equality and freedom and a regime that was based on repression and apartheid. Egypt, an African state with an African people, feels glad to see positive developments in South Africa, the most important of which is the agreement on the formation of a transitional Executive Council that would lead towards democracy and equal rights. The Council consists of representatives of majority as well as minority groups and would work within a framework of cooperation, co-existence and understanding. Despite the many obstacles and the great challenges that still lie ahead, the start has been encouraging and developments are promising. In this regard, we recognize the role played by President De Klerk. We also pay tribute to the role played by Nelson Mandela and his companions across the political spectrum in South Africa in turning a new leaf towards a common future.

The twenty-ninth African Summit Conference was held in Cairo last June. It gave the countries of the continent an opportunity to evaluate its progress on the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The meeting produced the Cairo Declaration, which reflected the imposing record of the struggle of the peoples of the African continent over the past three decades. The Declaration also put forward the member States' vision for the future and their conception of the manner in which they may adapt to the successive and quick international changes in shaping their conditions and relationships. The

Cairo summit discussions established many landmarks that would guide the direction of African activities in the coming years. They noted the options available to the continent and the challenges it has to face. The continent has expressed its determination to eliminate poverty, desertification and indebtedness and to initiate a comprehensive development process for its countries and peoples and to improve their economic and political conditions.

Despite the numerous problems of Africa, the continent has demonstrated that it is prepared to shoulder its responsibilities in facing up to the challenges posed by those problems. Most prominent among its decisions in this regard was the decision to establish an African machinery for resolving disputes. In that regard, the African States are have set forth a new mode of international cooperation and collaboration in shouldering responsibilities, notwithstanding all the difficulties facing the continent because of its continued low share in the world gross national product and the increasing cost of debt servicing. Such a situation, though restraining the continent's endeavors and weakening its capabilities, has not debilitated either its will or its determination.

The Cairo Summit was an expression of a determined attitude towards the indispensable need to make a number of adjustments to African policies and plans. It showed that the time has come to take the difficult decisions required to bridge the gap between Africa and the developed world - indeed, between Africa and many countries of the third world itself.

Mention of Africa leads to a discussion of the developments in the Horn of Africa. This is all the more important owing to the fact that the developments and interactions in the Horn of Africa are closely related to the security of the Middle East and of Africa in general. Hence, we welcome the independence of Eritrea and its accession to membership of the United Nations. We also express our deep regret at the situation in Somalia. In this regard, Egypt is fully cooperating with the international community, which has moved effectively to put an end to the famine that beleaguered that country and to the armed conflicts that have shaken its very existence. In the meantime, Egypt sympathizes with the people of Somalia in their aspiration after a secure future based on a national reconciliation that will serve the interests and meets the aspirations of all the Somali people and not merely the ambitions of a certain leader or faction. As a result, immediately after being elected Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, President Hosni Mubarak, inspired by Egypt's keen interest in the implementation of Security Council resolutions on the situation in Somalia, coordinated efforts with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAU to create the climate that would make it possible to achieve continued progress in the efforts designed to enable that brotherly country to begin the reconstruction and rehabilitation of its infrastructure and to permit its people - torn by conflicts and dissension - to clear the debris of discord and to reunite. That can be done only by helping the Somali people to achieve a comprehensive national reconciliation that would allow all its elements to express their will freely, without any repression or apprehension and without being blackmailed by power-seekers who instigate policies of destruction and annihilation. This is a responsibility that the Somali people, who fell prey to tribal disputes and personal ambitions, must shoulder, and the time has come to put an end to that situation from an exclusively national perspective.

Moving from Somalia to Angola where the situation has been aggravated by UNITA's disregard for the will of the majority of the people, expressed in free elections, Egypt calls for absolute support for Security Council resolution 864 (1993) which was adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, and which condemned UNITA and urged all States to refrain from providing any form of assistance to it until it respects the provisions of the "Acordos de Paz" as well as the will of the people of Angola and the resolutions of the United Nations.

Africa's problems are not confined to those of South Africa, the Horn of Africa or Angola. They also extend to numerous African States whether in the form of civil wars, such as the one in Liberia, with its impact on its neighbours, or in the form of internal political dissension, like that prevalent in many African States at the present time, in addition to all the development-related problems and the pangs of democratization. Nevertheless, Africa is ready, with determination and political will, to go beyond those problems and to embrace the twenty-first century and, all total confidence, steadfastness and determination, to be an active partner in the formulation of the desired new international order.

I began by reviewing some of the positive developments in international relations that gave us reason to look toward the future with hope. However, there have been other recent developments in the world which give rise to concerns and fears. Those developments have posed an essential question among a number of thinkers: What kind of a world order do we need, and would such

an order, whose foundations would be laid today, be an extension of the past, with its notions and policies, but in some new form, or would it be a mere reflection of the present with all its imbalances, contradictions and double standards? Or, rather, would it be a real and genuine development towards a future that may take us into the twenty-first century?

Living in just peace and prevailing stability is the prime demand, without which none of our aspirations will be attained. Peace is not a passive or abstract concept. It is the expression of the active and conscious will of all countries and peoples, small or large, to manage the common life on this planet, with all its peoples, entities and groupings, according to commonly agreed principles, values and guidelines.

Certain principles underlie our concept of living in conditions of peace and security, the most important of which are the following: first, respect and support for international legality to maintain the reverence for and predominance of the law we have all accepted; secondly, the principle of equal rights and obligations to relieve frustrated peoples and to encourage them to utilize their expertise and efforts in joint and integrated action for the benefit of all. All men are required to abide by the same rules in their international relations and to have a balanced share in regional and international responsibilities within a framework that gives priority to public interest.

Mr. Walosowicz (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Thirdly, the same standard should be applied in judging all cases that are similar in nature. The same provisions should be applied on a universal basis without selectivity or bias to ensure stability and security, reward compliance and punish and deter those who breach the accepted norms of international legality.

Fourthly, the principle of peace for all in the context of corresponding and balanced commitments should be respected.

Fifthly, the right to development should be respected and joint assistance made to developing countries, particularly to the least developed among them.

Respect for these principles constitutes direct and active implementation of the rules of international legality. It also represents a sincere response to the will of the international community. Their violation would threaten our efforts to agree on a more just and humane international order and would greatly harm the credibility and progress of such efforts.

I have to state here in all frankness that Muslim communities, and many others, have witnessed the manifestations of repression and bias in a number of international policies. This has become apparent in the hesitation and inconsistency witnessed in addressing the question of Bosnia and certain other issues. There is no doubt that a great deal of the suspicions of the Muslim world could have been dispelled if the Bosnian problem had been dealt with according to the established principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter relating to aggression, occupation, war crimes and crimes committed against humanity. All of those crimes have been committed against the people of Bosnia. This will not be forgotten by those who have witnessed that tragedy unfolding under their very eyes, day in and day out. Instead of addressing the problem in accordance with the principles of the Charter, the blockade has been tightened around the people of Bosnia and all manner of procrastination and stalling has prevailed. Egypt rejects this flagrant manipulation of the norms of justice. Such manipulation rewards the aggressor for his aggression. Egypt rejects this gross breach of human rights. How can anyone justify this hesitation in the face of Serb aggression against Bosnia on the part of the international community that stood against Iraq's Government when it committed aggression against Kuwait? And if we approve the demarcation of the Iraq-Kuwait border, why do we allow the Serbs to expand at the expense of the Bosnian people and their territorial rights?

The protraction of the Bosnian problem without a just solution acceptable to its people weakens the credibility of many international policies and developments. The only positive development in this regard may be the establishment of the International Tribunal for the prosecution of war criminals who have practiced ethnic cleansing. These prosecutions should target those who advocate or condone such practices that bespeak cultural decadence and criminality in those who perpetrate or advocate them.

The issue of human rights is one of the major questions that face us. We in Egypt believe that the human rights issue is universal both in content and nature. When we deal with this issue in Egypt, we look at it through the perspective of the cultural and historical heritage which is part of our national identity. We view it through our deep-rooted history extending through the

millennia; through our ancient Egyptian civilization; through our Islamic civilization, which is deeply impressed upon our consciousness; through our interaction with the Mediterranean civilizations; and through the legacy of the ages of renaissance and enlightenment in contemporary Europe, which have had their effect on philosophy and modern thought in Egypt.

The essence of this interlocking and integrated cultural heritage is the assertion of the individual human being's value, recognition of his role in working for revival and progress, and upholding his right to freedom of thought and creativity in line with Islam's sound principles which uphold man's personal and social freedom. Those principles maintain a balance between rights and duties as well as between the individual and society, so that neither may encroach on the rights of the other and so that all may live within a framework of a meticulously formulated social contract.

As we see it, the main aim of human rights is to protect the real interests of the individual, his family and his homeland, as well as his fundamental, essential and genuine right to live in safety and security. This is the primary right from which all other rights should emanate. All these rights must be protected from those who try to violate or deny them through terrorism or intimidation. All communities of the world are now in the same struggle against terroristic practices, whether they emanate from racial chauvinism, the radical right, doctrines of "ethnic cleansing" or religious fanaticism. All these doctrines follow practices that constitute gross violations of human rights, and should be defied.

In view of our firm stand in favour of safeguarding and maintaining human rights - foremost of which is the right to life and security - we are aware that real democracy is the best guarantee of stability, security and social peace. All political freedoms and rights, individual or collective, will remain forever incomplete if they are not complemented by economic, social and cultural rights. We believe that it is not an overstatement to say that the right of the individual and of the community to development and economic and political progress is closely related with their political and cultural rights in general. They reinforce each other and neither can proceed on its own.

One of the challenges now facing us is the need to demonstrate our collective ability to bring about a real change in the world economic order that would transcend narrow interests and considerations and rise to the level of real world partnership in striving for sustainable development for all and the protection of our common environment. Such a challenge requires us frankly to express our views concerning current international developments that give cause for concern with regard to the future.

The current world economic situation pivots on the centrality of the decision-making process which remains in the hands of the industrialized countries, with all that that entails with regard to the economies of developing countries. Furthermore, the current recession in the industrialized countries is reflected directly in the depression and increasing unemployment and poverty rates that plague the developing countries.

This situation is exacerbated by the protectionist measures put in place by rich countries in trying to face up to their economic problems. Developing countries find themselves helpless before such measures. They can only plead and hope. And this takes place at a time when most of the developing countries are in the throes of implementing rigorous programmes of economic reform. As the liberalization of trade constitutes a fundamental resource for development in the case of the developing countries, protectionism deprives those countries of the opportunity to reap the fruits of their agonized efforts in the area of economic reform and liberalization and severely hampers the integration of their economies in the world economy.

So far, we find nothing in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations that augurs well for the future. Today, the developing countries find themselves marginalized by side deals in which they do not participate. Such deals are characterized by ambiguity rather than transparency. They jeopardize the interests of developing countries. On the other hand, the developments of the last two years have demonstrated that the international monetary system is no better than the trade system. Conflicting goals of monetary and macro-economic policies in industrialized countries have led to a state of chaos in foreign exchange markets, destabilizing the world economic order, with all resultant adverse effects on developing economies.

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro was an important milestone on the road of constructive dialogue between North and South for a world partnership to counter the dangers facing our planet. In spite of the meagre progress that has been achieved in the implementation of the Rio resolutions, we still perceive a marked difference between the perspectives of the developed and the developing

countries. The developed countries focus mainly on the symptoms of the crisis, which represent a major threat to their life styles and their welfare, even though it was those very countries which contributed to the deterioration of the environment.

By contrast, many developing countries continue to suffer from environmental pollution for which other countries are largely responsible. In their attempt to solve problems of debt, declining commodity prices and trade barriers as well as the problems of sustainable development and the requirements for environmental protection, Governments found that they were facing a real impasse leading to low productivity and declining growth rates which in turn led to more poverty.

In the long run, the divergence between these two perspectives may hinder comprehensive world action to deal with the world environmental crisis. In order to surmount this dilemma, all parties are called upon to shoulder their responsibility for lending credibility to and promoting the acceptance of the slogans of interdependence and world partnership.

In this regard, it is important to address an integral aspect of the equation for achieving development and preserving the environment: the population problem, which threatens both sides of that equation. We are all aware of the extent of this problem, which completely absorbs the yields of development and will ensure the continued destruction of the environment.

The International Conference on Population and Development, which Cairo will host in September 1994, represents an opportune occasion for the international community to address population issues from the appropriate developmental perspective and from the perspective of their relationship to issues of economic and social development.

We in Egypt, as the host country, shall exert every effort to ensure the success of this important conference, and we are confident that its outcome will represent a sound context for international cooperation in the field of population and development.

Our discussion of the conditions and circumstances of the Third World leads us to a broader and more comprehensive discussion of the political movements and groupings with which the various developing countries are associated, despite their different orientations and stages of development. It is high time for us to stop and ask ourselves what these groupings have achieved and what can be done to further their legitimate goals. We need to reflect on this issue in a frank, constructive and objective manner. It has become apparent that the challenges facing the developing countries have changed substantially. We are on the threshold of new international conditions and challenges which have different economic, political and security effects.

In Egypt, we have already begun to study this issue, taking into consideration the positive and the negative effects of the past decades at the political, economic and social levels in the Third World, and the implications for changing priorities and areas of concern. We have come to the following conclusions:

Firstly, the so-called Third World represents the majority of the world population and the majority of world countries. It has the major share in the production of primary commodities, and it has vast market potential. This Third World is fully entitled to be a full-fledged partner in the ongoing restructuring process at the world level.

Secondly, in order to be able to do so, the Third World has to mould a political collective will, and this can only be achieved through democratic open discussion between its States.

Thirdly, this, in turn, can only be achieved through the establishment of a political system or movement that would include all these States.

Fourthly, the ultimate aim should be dialogue, negotiation and partnership within a framework of cooperation, collaboration and integration, rather than confrontation or conflict.

Today, I propose that the developing countries embark on a dialogue aimed at establishing a grouping for the Third World, a grouping within which the developing countries would deal with the political, economic and social aspects of various world issues, a grouping to coordinate their positions and shape their contribution towards the laying of the foundations of the new world order which we hope will prevail during the 21st century.

The developments we have just reviewed, and the successive changes we are witnessing, strengthen Egypt's belief in the pivotal role of the United Nations in managing international relations in line with the principles and provisions of its Charter.

Egypt attaches great importance to increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations and preserving its credibility. We are aware of the nature and number of the challenges that face the international Organization, perhaps for the first time. These urgent challenges were suddenly pushed to the surface of international relations by historical developments that were never imagined by the founding fathers or the drafters of the Charter. We all agree that the momentum that characterized the past few years was so pressing and rapid that there should be a comprehensive review of the United Nations mechanisms and structure, if we are serious in our effort to adjust the international will to the facts of our age, and if we are eager to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations.

In this connection, and with reference to the envisaged structural changes, I would like to state that Egypt, as one of the States which took part in the formulation of the Charter, and as one of the founding states of the Organization, is mainly concerned with the continued presence of the United Nations and its principles, message, prestige and credibility to serve the causes of international peace and security without interruption.

Needless to say, the burdens of the United Nations in the post-cold war era are far greater than they were during the cold war itself. If the collective will of the international community agrees to make structural changes in the membership of the Security Council, for example, Egypt - which is undertaking an effective role within the international order in the formulation of regional and international relations and in establishing the concepts and principles on which we all agree, in addition to its participation in numerous peace-keeping operations on several continents - has the right and the potential to contribute in a responsible manner to the proposed institutional restructuring of the United Nations. Egypt has the desire and determination to take part both in the process itself and in setting the standards and values to be used in the process. Egypt believes that it has now gained the requisite standing to be included within the framework of the ongoing discussion and within the new membership.

We must open the doors to a better future in whose creation all of us will participate to achieve the 21st century world for which we hope. This is the time for collective formulation of a new solid and stable world order. This is the great challenge that faces us all at a time of unprecedented opportunity.

Mr. BEN YAHIA (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I am particularly pleased to offer my warm congratulations to Ambassador Insanally, both on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Tunisia, on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am delighted to see him directing our work and I am convinced that in the choice it has made, the General Assembly intended to honour his country, which has been devoted to the cause of peace and international cooperation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank his predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the contribution he made to the work of the forty-seventh session and for the great skill he evinced at that time.

It is also a pleasant duty to pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the Organization, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his efforts and the determination in implementing the objectives and decisions of the United Nations aimed at resolving conflicts throughout the world. His is far from an easy task, particularly since those conflicts have multiplied and the activity and role of the United Nations today have increased as well.

I should also like to congratulate the new Member States that have acceded recently to membership of our Organization and to welcome their delegations here present. I am quite certain that they will make their own valuable contributions to what is being done by the United Nations to promote peace and cooperation between nations.

After the spectacular upheavals that the world has undergone, the current session provides us with a propitious opportunity to take a close look at the circumstances and the prospects offered by these changes and to consider ways and means of strengthening our Organization and its new fields of action, particularly on the basis of preventive diplomacy and on building relationships of trust and cooperation between States.

Starting from 7 November 1987, Tunisia has been engaged in laying the foundations of a modern and advanced State capable of adapting to the changes that have taken place and continue to take place in the world. Tunisia hopes that after the era of dogmatism and ideology, the world will be able to evince greater maturity by putting more vigour in striving for cooperation between nations and solidarity between peoples.

One of the signs of such maturity is undoubtedly the dynamic peace process in the Middle East. There can be no doubt that the premisses of peace in the Middle East which are now attracting the attention of the entire

international community are an indication that an end to decades of confrontation, destruction and suffering is now in view.

The historic mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the declaration of principles relating to the occupied territories are all important signposts along the road towards recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and are a cause for hope that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East is in the offing.

Tunisia, while welcoming these developments, would like to voice the hope that Israel will show the necessary courage to reach agreement with the Arab parties concerned in order to achieve a just and lasting peace that will guarantee that all the peoples of the region will live in security and stability, and that in the place of strife and conflict there will be good-neighbourliness.

Devoted as it is to the universal values of peace and justice, Tunisia will continue to endeavour to give impetus to this dynamic peace process in the Middle East with a view to undoing the knot of the crises and conflicts that beset the world today.

In line with this stance, Tunisia has made a point of being associated with the efforts of the international community and with the work of the United Nations in the service of peace, security and stability.

It is in this context that we should view Tunisia's participation in the operations involving supervision of the elections in Cambodia, despite the enormous difficulties that were encountered.

Also, Tunisia recently responded to the United Nations appeal to take part in the Somali operation; unfortunately, the situation seems to indicate that a return of peace in the short term seems rather unlikely.

Tunisia also responded to the United Nations appeal to be associated in United Nations efforts in the Western Sahara, the purpose of which is to lay the groundwork for holding a referendum.

Regarding the tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia once again appeals to the conscience of the world to work determinedly towards seeking a just settlement based on law and international legality rather than on the basis of *fait accompli* politics, so that a swift end may be put to this tragedy, particularly as winter is near.

Since it remains faithful to its Arab and Islamic identity, and since it also belongs to the Maghreb, Tunisia will do everything it can to strengthen the ties of brotherhood and cooperation in order to achieve our objectives so that we may be able to realize the aspirations of our peoples of a better future. It is in this spirit that Tunisia and Algeria have recently concluded an agreement on the demarcation of the borders between our two fraternal countries. The agreement will be deposited shortly with the United Nations.

In this context, we should like to express our sincere hope that all the problems in the Gulf region will be properly and rationally resolved, including the boundary disputes between Iraq and Kuwait and between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that this will be achieved by peaceful means in line with existing agreements and the norms of international legality, in keeping with the new spirit which now inspires international relations as well as with the aspirations of our world after peace and stability in this particularly sensitive region.

Tunisia's efforts on the Arab Maghreb's level in its capacity as current president of the Arab Maghreb Union aim at creating the necessary conditions that would enable us to make progress in building the Maghreb and strengthening its role in the international arena. Building the edifice of the Maghreb is part and parcel of the current development of international relations, which favours regional groupings. We for our part are doing everything we can to ensure that the Arab Maghreb Union keeps pace with events in a way that will make it possible to establish fruitful relations in the international context and more particularly with the regional Arab, European and Mediterranean groups so that, as a group it may serve as an instrument of peace and cooperation and a bastion of security and stability.

The dispute between Libya, a member of the Arab Maghreb Union and three Western countries is a source of deep concern for us. Tunisia has worked hard within the Maghreb framework and at the Arab level to find a negotiated and honourable settlement that would safeguard the interests of all parties and spare the region the risk of any escalation of tension and instability.

Tunisia has always worked for strengthening peace and cooperation in Africa. It is our hope that in future

Africa will reap the beneficial side-effects of the profound international political and economic changes that have taken place, so that it may devote its efforts to development.

Tunisia, which has welcomed the process of change in South Africa, and looks forward with optimism to seeing the April 1994 elections restore this great African country to a place worthy of its standing within the African family, calls upon all political parties to respect the agreement that has been concluded, and to implement it in good faith so that the peoples of Azania can see an end to racism and the advent of a new era of democracy.

The establishment, at the most recent Summit of the Organization of African Unity, of machinery for the management and settlement of conflicts in Africa is also a source of great satisfaction. In our view, this is evidence of the determination of the African Heads of State to turn the page once and for all on wars and disputes and to embark upon a new era based on dialogue and fruitful cooperation.

Henceforth, Africa will have to rely essentially on its own resources. However, it does need the support of the international community so that its efforts may succeed in achieving the goal of African development and African stability.

Attention should be drawn to the suffering of many African States as a result of upheavals and conflicts such as those witnessed by Somalia, Liberia and Angola, which have now become sources of major concern for the entire international community. The international community must not remain unmoved by such events, which undermine whole States and sap their potential. We believe that the international community is capable of contributing genuinely to national reconciliation in those countries, and that by so doing it will make it possible to eliminate all the other sources of tension in the continent.

The profound changes in international relations have undoubtedly imparted a global dimension to the problems of the world. International solidarity and cooperation in the new shape they have taken, have become an absolute necessity whether the issue in question has to do with the maintenance of peace, disarmament, the upholding of human rights, or with addressing problems relating to the environment, demography and development.

On November 7th, Tunisia charted for itself an unswerving course in that area and boldly has taken several decisive steps toward laying the foundations of a State that functions under the rule of law, through institutions that uphold fundamental freedoms. Thus the concepts and principles of human rights, freedom, pluralism, the rule of law and State institutions, have become constants on which all Tunisians unite around their President Ben Ali, in order to devote themselves to laying the foundations of our society.

Tunisia has spared no effort to ensure the success of the International Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, to facilitate the successful elaboration of a common approach and to identify the appropriate machinery to ensure respect for human rights.

My country remains convinced that development, combatting poverty, the settlement of disputes that arise from foreign occupation, the elimination of racism and fanaticism, are all absolute imperatives in defending human rights of people, ensuring the stability of States and enabling their peoples to progress.

In this respect, I should like to highlight one particular scourge namely the dangerous phenomenon of extremism and terrorism, especially that type of extremism which dons the garb and mask of religion while, in spirit and action, it constitutes a total negation of democracy and human rights.

Tunisia, which unmasked in time the doublespeak of that type of extremism, has been able, through an overall strategy of political, economic, cultural and social achievement, to contain this phenomenon and thwart its designs. Consequently, our country now enjoys safety, stability and continued progress.

We have listened with great attention to President William Clinton when he spoke this morning of the risks which continue to threaten security and stability throughout the world, particularly extremism - racial extremism above all - and religious extremism, which breed hatred and terrorism. Tunisia continues to appeal to the international community to intensify its efforts to contain this phenomenon which sows anarchy and chaos in the bosom of the international community and hampers the development process.

It is high time for the international community as a whole to give serious thought to this phenomenon, to define its various forms and manifestations and to devise an international course of action and a legal framework to combat it. We should also look for just foundations that

would reinforce the laws of asylum now in force in all States.

It is obvious that while the right of asylum acquires a humanitarian character and is essentially a part of State sovereignty, the granting of asylum should be in accordance with certain ethical rules and principles which must be respected.

Tunisia believes that the right of asylum is one of those common human values which must not be used for the purposes other than those for which they were created.

The persistence of old problems and conflicts which drag on in various parts of the world, delays in development which plague a considerable segment of mankind highlight the fragility of peace and security. Consequently, it is essential to work for genuine disarmament. It was in keeping with this thinking that Tunisia acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Treaty banning the development of biological weapons and signed, in January 1993, in Paris, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.

I hardly need to recall that the concept of security transcends the purely military aspects and embraces various elements that encompass political stability and economic security. This means we have to draw up an agenda for development as a necessary prerequisite for the success of An Agenda for Peace.

The right of both present and future generations to live in a healthy environment is today at the very centre of the concerns of the international community and is one of the main concerns of my country.

To this end, Tunisia adopts a policy that combines preventive and remedial environmental programmes. That policy has yielded so far, many tangible results, in areas such as the conservation and safeguarding of natural resources, the protection of fisheries and coastlines, and the improvement of the quality of life. Ratification of the international conventions which followed the Earth Summit and the creation of a national Commission on Sustainable Development are all tangible facts which reflect Tunisia's commitment to the implementation of the decisions of the Rio de Janeiro Summit.

It goes without saying that steps taken at the national level can only be viable to the extent that the international community succeeds in identifying the interrelationships between the problems of the environment and those of development.

In this connection, there is need for a new approach in addressing the issues of North-South relations. This means moving towards strengthening of a multilateral economic system in order effectively to respond to the priorities of the poorer countries.

Tunisia has constantly given concrete expression to cooperation between the North and the South in its various aspects because it is convinced of the interdependence of the interests of the two groupings and the link between the growth and volume of assistance provided by the countries of the North. That is why it would be judicious to formulate a new approach to international cooperation which would encompass development assistance, trade, investment and the transfer of technology.

To avoid a North-South schism, the developed countries must take account of the economic problems of the countries of the South, especially those problems that relate to the development process as well as the problems relating to the restructuring of their economies and to indebtedness.

We cannot deal with international trade without taking up one vital question, namely the necessity of establishing a link between the transfer of technology to the developing countries and capital flows.

In this connection, it must be recalled that indebtedness and debt-servicing, in the case of the developing countries, in most cases is the main obstacle that impedes further development and hampers full participation in the world economy.

Although Tunisia has always honoured its financial commitments I should like in this connection to reiterate some proposals we made earlier on this subject: in particular regarding the rescheduling of debt by creating a special fund to finance job-creating development projects.

There is no doubt that such projects, in addition to their direct return which would be beneficial to the recipient countries, will have the effect of settling populations in their original regions and thus contribute to reducing migratory flows to wealthier countries.

In this very Hall, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali proposed a contract for peace and development that in our estimation, would strengthen the existing capabilities and

enhance potential in the States of the North and of the South alike.

In his recent address to the European Parliament at Strasbourg in June 1993, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali further proposed organizing a conference on the development of the Maghreb States with a view to establishing a new political, economic, social and cultural partnership between the Maghreb and the European States.

Before concluding, I wish to touch on the question of the restructuring of the organs of the United Nations. I want again to welcome the initiatives of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali to adapt the universal Organization's structures to the ongoing changes in international relations, to rationalize the activities of the United Nations system and to reorganize the methods of its functioning. The elements of the proposed reform package should be carefully considered and discussed by all Member States with a view to making the Organization's new structure more efficacious.

The projected reforms - whether involving enlargement of the Security Council, redeployments in the Secretariat or cuts in spending - deserve our attention to the extent that they take account of the interests of the developing countries. We think the reforms should emphasize the principle of equality among Member States and guarantee decision-making balance among the Organization's various organs, and particularly with respect to the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Let me conclude by reiterating my wishes for the success of the work of the forty-eighth session; we count on it to realize the hopes of the peoples of our world.

ADDRESS BY MRS. GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND, PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, Her Excellency Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, and inviting her to address the General Assembly.

Mrs. BRUNDTLAND (*Norway*): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Ambassador Insanally on his election to the high office of President of the General Assembly.

I should also like to welcome the new Members of our Organization: Andorra, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, Monaco, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Slovakia.

The historic and courageous breakthrough in the Middle East tells us that even the deepest trench can be bridged. Conflict has tormented that entire region for most of this century. It has brought super-Powers to the brink of war. It has placed enormous burdens on the United Nations itself. It has deprived families of their dear ones and held people under the ominous spell of fear.

Now we must seize the moment. Now we are at a turning point for the United Nations as well. Now we must answer the clarion call and mobilize our collective political and financial resources to help move the peace process forward.

The time has come to let the divisive, acrimonious Middle East debates and decisions of the past fade into history. Israeli and Palestinian leaders have made reality of the seemingly impossible. We would fail abysmally in our duties should we falter now in our efforts to support the process of prying peace out of the knot of conflict, a process which men and women of vision have dared to think, dared to do.

Due to our long-standing relations with the parties, both our friendship with Israeli leaders and the mutual trust we have established with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Norway was privileged to contribute to these defining dramatic events.

In this spirit, we shall go to Washington on 1 October, committed to help in building peace. For the peace process to succeed, it must be consolidated and stabilized by the economic development the two parties have agreed to undertake together.

The fruits of peace must become tangible and real for the women, men and children of Gaza and the West Bank. The process of implementation could change the perspectives and expectations of the parties, convert interdependence into a sense of community, and make possible solutions and visions which today seem beyond reach.

The economic situation in Gaza and on the West Bank is dramatic and calls for immediate and extensive economic aid. Now we must respond to the just but unfulfilled aspirations of the Palestinians: for job opportunities and for schools, hospitals and universities. Now we must assist in building houses, roads and water supplies, and make reconciliation pay, so that new generations of Israelis and Palestinians may grow up without fear, as good neighbours, in a life of dignity.

A period of healing is needed in which all peace-loving countries, the United Nations itself, the Bretton Woods institutions, other financial institutions and the European Community join financially - and substantially - in a coordinated, immediate investment-for--peace programme. I pledge and confirm that Norway's assistance will be substantial and that we shall be honoured to play a continuing political role should the parties so desire.

A period of renewal and change must also embrace South Africa and our relations with that country. South Africa is in desperate need of peace and reconciliation. Fixing a date for democratic elections in April next year is a beacon of hope that the post-Apartheid system will finally gain the democratic legitimacy which the South African Government cannot claim today.

Until the day when black South Africans can enjoy the human rights of which they have been oppressively deprived, until the day when violence is ended and joint political control has been established over the military and police forces, until that day South Africa will remain a country in imperative transition.

The outside world and the United Nations must, in time, recognize the potential of post-apartheid South Africa - at peace with itself and endowed with immensely rich natural and human resources - for the whole region of southern Africa. Education and training are needed for generations which are now ready to assume an equal role in the economy of their country. We must now act forcefully, encouraging proponents of peace and transition, and discourage the shrill voices of hatred and interposition so that one day - soon - the South African man and woman may be free at last.

We must never lose hope that peace can be achieved. But our hope has been severely tested by the protracted atrocities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There seems to be no limit to the brutality that human beings are capable of mobilizing in the service of a nationalistic goal. Such acts have been committed in the name of a doctrine - the doctrine of the ethnic state - and thus prolong the sinister existence of doctrine as a source of war and contention in this century.

Ethnic nationalism is a threat to peace and stability everywhere. The ethnic mosaic of Europe does not lend itself to such reduction. A doctrine of the ethnic state is a prescription for war. Our task is to build communities which include rather than exclude and to make all multi-ethnic regions safe refuges of enlightened diversity.

A military victory in which aggression appears to pay in Bosnia will be noted in those parts of the world where different nationalities are sharing territory and political organization. In the former Soviet Union alone, ethnic tensions are reaching critical mass or have already erupted, as in Nagorny-Karabakh and Abkhazia.

The authority of the United Nations is seriously undermined if there is vacillation on where and how to use the "Blue Helmets". We should admit that there have been failures along the way and learn from experience. Our main thrust must be to aim for a negotiated solution based on known elements. The alternative to a negotiated settlement is continued bloodshed. The alternative to peace is war. Norway fully supports the efforts of Thorvald Stoltenberg and David Owen. All parties must now cease hostilities and allow time for the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina to heal so that we can start slowly to build a foundation for peace. Let us be inspired by the Israelis and the Palestinians, and let us all send a message to the parties in Bosnia: enough! Peace is possible.

The time for a settlement is long overdue. The situation is already disastrous, and another winter of war is bound to take a severe toll of lives. Norway is among the major providers of humanitarian assistance to the area. International attention is focused on the terrible ordeal of the Muslims, but there are Croats and Serbs who suffer greatly as well. We should be even-handed in our humanitarian assistance, making a clear distinction between, on the one hand, warlords and war criminals and, on the other, those on all sides who are without a voice and without a choice, those who are victimized and whose only hope is the assistance we can provide from the outside.

It is absolutely imperative to improve on the coordination and cooperation between United Nations peace-keeping operations, United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental humanitarian organizations.

Somalia is an obvious case in point. For Norway it is a priority issue to move such coordination forward. We shall convene a conference before the end of the year with the aim of improving our capacity to organize real peace operations incorporating both humanitarian and military tasks.

We should all support our Secretary-General's proposals for a necessary strengthening of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. The management organization for United Nations peace-keeping operations here in New York is manifestly inadequate. The result is that troop-contributing nations exercise direct control, which radically reduces coherence and effectiveness. The situation is aggravated by the Security Council's propensity to make ambitious decisions but fail to provide the Secretariat with the means to implement them. Failing to provide financial, human and technological resources undermines both peace and the authority of the United Nations.

We know what needs to be done. We must focus on the following: There must be realistic mandates for new United Nations peace-keeping operations whose goals and means must be clearly defined. We must have proper stand-by arrangements for troops and equipment from Member States, and Norway is prepared to contribute in concrete terms to a collective stand-by effort. We need improved training and analysis of past experience; our training facilities should be linked in a consortium for United Nations peace-keeping training. There must be an immediate and substantial increase in the United Nations reserve fund for peace-keeping; moreover, a unified peace--keeping budget must be introduced which allows the Secretary-General to obligate at least 20 per cent of the estimated cost of peace-keeping operations once they have been approved by the Security Council. We need improved financing for peace-keeping operations and financial discipline among Member States.

Indeed, the whole financial situation of the United Nations is disgraceful. As the eighth-largest contributor to the United Nations system in absolute terms and by far the largest in per capita terms, we find it exceedingly difficult to understand how so many countries fail to honour their obligations.

The Secretary-General has said that "the Organization lives from hand to mouth." (*Statement by the Secretary-General to the Fifth Committee, 26 August 1993*). The permanent members of the Security Council have a special responsibility. But we should also ask ourselves if countries should be eligible at all for the Security Council if they have not paid their contributions.

The post-cold-war patterns of risks and uncertainties have brought about a wider recognition and understanding of the need to address the serious economic and social inequalities in the world and their implications for global security. Core issues such as environment and development used to be seen as side issues by the prime movers of international affairs. There is a new hope that this could be changing.

The Secretary-General points out in his report that without sustainable development peace cannot long be maintained and that political, social, educational and environmental factors must all be part of development.

Unsustainable production and consumption patterns still prevail and can be counteracted only by changing how and in which fields our economies continue to grow. If current forms of development were employed, a further fivefold to tenfold boost in economic activity would be required over the next 50 years to meet the needs and aspirations of 10 billion people.

Currently, the vast majority who are poor make only a minimal claim to our natural resources, while the more voracious North is consuming in a few decades what it has taken the planet billions of years to accumulate. The Norwegian Minister of the Environment raised the issue of production and consumption patterns in the industrial part of the world at the first session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Early next year Norway will host a meeting on these issues as a contribution to the next session of the Commission.

The rapid population growth in many parts of the world is a ticking time-bomb. Ninety per cent of this increase is taking place in developing countries, many of which are unable to feed their present populations. We may soon be facing new famine of a magnitude dwarfing even Malthus' gloomiest predictions. There may be mass migration and the destabilization of countries and regions as people compete for ever-scarcer land and water resources.

The International Conference on Population and Development, to take place in Cairo in September 1994, must address the complex root causes of the population explosion.

The agreements reached at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio last year, however imperfect, set a sound, ambitious agenda for action to ensure sustainable development. Yet, I regret to say, the momentum generated in Rio has been allowed to lose some of its force.

The world will not forget, and our children will long remember, that the industrialized countries committed themselves in Rio to providing new and additional funding to combat climate change and safeguard biological diversity. So far, however, contributions have been small-scale.

The aid fatigue continues despite enormous needs and a more fertile ground for development in countries which have made sacrifices and taken the bitter but crucial medicine of structural adjustment, and despite the reduction of military budgets to levels where countries again should be deemed creditworthy.

Far, far more serious, and not only for the developing world, is the gambling with the Uruguay Round holding the prospects of global free trade hostage to narrow national interests. For most countries, strongly dependent as they are on international trade, an agreement, even if each and every provision may not be ideal, is absolutely necessary. I urge the major parties to live up to the expectations created at the Group of 7 meeting in Tokyo that before the end of the year the deal will be closed.

Environment and trade must be the next agenda item. We should be more outspoken about conflicting interests and more receptive to the fact that we do not have the option to go our separate ways.

We must develop a sound, scientific basis for managing our natural resources in a sustainable way. In a politically, culturally and socially diverse world, science and knowledge can be the only basis for sound and lasting cooperation in this field.

And while we reduce our strain on finite natural resources, the environmental agenda is constantly widened by the unveiling of the ecocide almost committed by the former Communist countries.

The nuclear threat is not confined to that inherent in the remaining arsenals of nuclear weapons. Increasingly, our security is threatened by the enormous deposits of nuclear waste on land and at sea. Large-scale international cooperation is required to eliminate this threat.

Nuclear weapons have not disappeared, and the capacity to make them is broadly present. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery constitutes perhaps the greatest threat to international peace and stability. It is a matter of utmost priority to broaden and deepen the non-proliferation regime to comprise a broader pattern of commitments and cooperative behaviour. In this connection, Norway urges the nuclear-weapon States to redouble their efforts to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We expect that they will refrain from any testing while negotiations proceed. We also urge North Korea to submit fully to the safeguard regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Development without democracy and respect for human rights will never be sustainable. Democracy is indispensable for promoting and upholding respect for human rights, for social and economic development, for peace and security, and for liberating the human creativity which is so vital to any social and economic development.

I urge this Assembly to create the post of high commissioner for human rights and to agree on a quantum leap in the allocation of resources for the United Nations human-rights activities. This is a modest price to pay for strengthening the basis for peace and stability.

The lines between foreign and domestic policies have long since vanished. Narrow-minded forms of nationalism will not serve us. We must move towards an inclusive enlargement where the powerful are just and the weak secure. Only the United Nations can provide the framework of a better-organized world, which today is too fragmented and uncoordinated. More and more causes are common, as, indeed, is our whole future.

The Middle East breakthrough gives us the hope that no challenge is too difficult and the belief that we can make this world a civilized place.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway for the statement she has just made.

Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. EVANS (Australia): I warmly congratulate Ambassador Insanally, on his election as President of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. As a fellow

Commonwealth member with Guyana, Australia is very pleased to serve in the Assembly under his presidency.

This session of the General Assembly will deal with a particularly heavy and important agenda. It will do so at a time when hopes for, and expectations of, the United Nations have never been greater - but when, at the same time, many doubts have been raised about the capacity of the United Nations system to cope. We will be relying very much, Mr. President, on your wisdom and your experience as you preside over our deliberations.

Mrs. Fritsche (Liechtenstein), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The world is a rather less happy place than we all hoped it would be after the end of the cold war. Economic and social deprivation continues to be a harsh daily reality for many of our countries and our peoples. Not even the most advanced countries are immune. The developed Western economies are limping, with low growth rates, historically high unemployment rates, increasing disparities as a result between rich and poor, and a continuing inability so far to reach agreement - either between themselves or with the rest of the world's trading nations - about the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade liberalization measures so necessary to give a new kick-start to world trade and economic growth.

In the non-Western world, rates of growth have been extraordinarily uneven. The spectacular advance in some regions, in particular East Asia, has been in stark contrast to the continuing terrible deprivation and poverty in others. Some States have simply been unable to cope with exploding internal economic, political and social problems, and for all practical purposes have collapsed, leaving the international community to respond, somehow, to the humanitarian crises that have followed so often.

In security terms, the end of the cold war has seen the end of the super-Power nuclear-arms race and has relieved us of the immediate threat of nuclear devastation. We have seen major achievements in nuclear-arms reduction; and for the first time in the history of the nuclear age a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which would ban all nuclear tests in all environments for all time, seems within our reach. We could help to make it even more so by adopting by consensus a resolution in this Assembly supporting the negotiation of that treaty. A very great deal, of course, depends on the current moratorium on all nuclear testing being maintained. We in Australia very strongly support what President Clinton said in that respect this morning.

This year we signed at last, after 20 years of negotiation, the chemical weapons Convention. But much remains to be done to bring this and other instruments into effective operation. And there are still too many countries unwilling to submit themselves to the disciplines, more important and more necessary now than ever, of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty.

The threat of conflicts between States has certainly not diminished with the end of the cold war. If anything, the removal of the cold-war gridlock - the discipline imposed by the super-Powers on each other and their respective supporters - has created more room than ever for States to manoeuvre. Some are beginning to do so, and some are bound to seek to do so in the future. Some of the emerging economic Powers have yet to acquire political or military profiles commensurate with their new wealth, and the process of adjustment certainly has ample potential to generate regional tensions. Should those tensions escalate into conflict, the unhappy reality is that proliferation of more sophisticated conventional weapons and proliferation of the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction make any prospect of major regional conflict an alarming one for the world as a whole.

The release of cold-war pressures has been associated with another major new development of security concern with which we are all now disturbingly familiar: the resurgence of ethno-nationalism, often taking a violent form. Some ethnic groups are being prepared to pursue their claims for self-determination within the framework of existing States, arguing essentially for minority human rights protection - claims of right which, on first principles, we should all be prepared to acknowledge and support. But many other such groups have made clear that they will be satisfied by nothing less than their nations becoming States, causing the fragmentation of existing States in the process, and creating some very real dilemmas for the international community as a result. Again, the proliferating availability of weaponry of every degree of sophistication has given a sharp new edge to these concerns.

Looking out upon a world with all these characteristics, it is easy to be pessimistic and fatalistic. But I do not think we should retreat into that habit of mind. For everything that has gone wrong over the last few years, there is something else that has gone right. To match against the awful continuing tragedy in the former Yugoslavia, we have, for example, this month's peace agreement in the Middle East - of course, only the first step in what remains a long journey, but an enormously

encouraging one notwithstanding. And to match against the continuing chaos and uncertainty in Somalia, and the at best very limited success of the United Nations operation there, we have now the unquestioned success of the United Nations operation in Cambodia - and the end at last to more than 20 years of what has been a real twentieth-century tragedy involving bloody war, civil war, genocide, invasion and civil war again.

A terrible conflict continues in Angola, but peace is at hand at last in Mozambique; and in South Africa the final death of apartheid is imminent, as testified last week in this place by Nelson Mandela. Military regimes have given way to democratic ones throughout Latin America. Many problems remain to be solved in the former Soviet Union, but Governments that can credibly claim to reflect the will of their peoples are in place throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The military regime in Myanmar, or Burma, continues to resist the obvious mood of its people for liberty and democracy, but elsewhere in the region traditionally monolithic government structures - driven in many cases by economic imperatives - are beginning to show signs of flexibility and responsiveness.

But while I do not believe that we should be unduly pessimistic or fatalistic about the condition of the world around us, nor can we afford to be complacent. There is much more that we can and should be doing to reinforce and strengthen the international community's capacity to govern itself better, and in particular to better guarantee the maintenance of peace and security in the post-cold-war world. It is on this subject - the role of the United Nations and the international community generally in securing peace in the world of the 1990s and beyond that I want specifically to focus my remarks today.

A little over a year ago, following a unique meeting of the Security Council, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali published "An Agenda for Peace". It was and remains a remarkable document, one which poses most of the questions we need to address if we are to have a fair chance of maintaining international peace and security in the world of today and the foreseeable future. Since that time, a worldwide debate has taken place on the issues described in "An Agenda for Peace", which has involved not only Governments and officials, but has reached out to embrace universities, foundations, non-governmental organizations and many organs of the public media as well. This debate generated resolutions at the last session of the General Assembly, several worthwhile changes to some procedures and structures within the Secretariat, and the prospect of further changes to come.

It cannot be said, however, that the issues raised by "An Agenda for Peace" are now all settled, either in theory or in practice. We still do not have even a completely clear and consistent shared vocabulary to define the ways in which it is possible for the United Nations and other organs of the international community to respond to security problems: "peacemaking", for example, means different things still to different people; so do "preventive diplomacy" and "peace building"; the conceptual boundary between "peace-keeping" on the one hand and "peace enforcement" on the other is not drawn in the same way by everyone who uses these terms.

Nor do we seem yet to have clear and universal agreement even as to the kind of problems which justify a security response by the international community. Should we recognize, for example, a humanitarian right of intervention and, if so, in what circumstances and to what extent? When does an economic or social problem become the kind of security problem which justifies the mobilization of the response strategies spelt out in Chapters VI and VII of the United Nations Charter?

Even when it comes to applying a very familiar response to a new problem - for example, establishing a peace-keeping operation like the 30 which have now been initiated since 1946 - there does not yet seem to have been developed a commonly accepted check list of criteria to guide decision-makers in determining when precisely the operation should be set in train, how it should be structured, managed and resourced, or how long it should continue. Every situation, of course, has its own characteristics, but is it really necessary for decisions on these matters by the Security Council or others to be made on so evidently ad hoc a basis?

When it comes to thinking about how the United Nations - and others in the international community, including regional organizations - might best be structured, organized, managed and funded to most effectively address the international peace and security agenda, it is not clear to me that we have yet heard the last word in that debate.

An extraordinary amount has been achieved in the tumultuous period since 1989 in responding to the new demands and challenges that have been unceasingly hurled at the United Nations, but a good deal more remains to be done if the United Nations in particular, the only fully empowered body with global membership that we have, is to be as effective as we would all want it to be.

It is much easier, of course, to ask all these questions than to answer them. Identifying problems is always easier than defining acceptable solutions. But I believe that we all have a responsibility to each other and the international community to try to answer these questions and to keep on working away at the answers until we find common ground. So it is in that spirit that I put before the Assembly today a detailed study of these questions, which tries to answer them in a way which might help us find a little more of that common ground.

The study, in the form of a book entitled *Cooperating for Peace,* has been distributed, I hope, to delegations as I speak. I do not pretend for a moment that this says the last word on any of the enormously complex and sensitive issues with which it deals. It is simply an Australian contribution to the debate which was so thoughtfully and constructively initiated by the Secretary-General last year.

The study seeks to do three things in particular. First, it suggests ways of bringing a little more clarity - to the extent this is presently lacking - into the concepts and vocabulary that we use in defining security problems, defining possible responses and matching responses to problems. Secondly, it suggests specific criteria that might be applied by decision-makers in deciding what, if any, response is appropriate to a particular new security problem. And, thirdly, it suggests a priority list of areas in which further United Nations reform might usefully be pursued. In the short time that remains to me I shall try to give a quick, outline sketch of what we are trying to say in each of these respects.

First of all, on the issue of concepts and terminology, it is perhaps worth making the point at the outset that this is not just something for academics to wrangle about. It matters in practice. If decision-makers do not share the same basic way of looking at issues and the same basic vocabulary in defining them, there is a very real risk that they will talk past each other - or, at the very least, find it very much harder to produce responses which are timely, properly graduated, effective in practice, affordable and broadly consistent from one case to the next.

Just as importantly, the choice of words can sometimes significantly influence the way in which we think about matters of substance. To give just one example: If we use, as many people still do, the expression "peace-making" to describe military enforcement action, then, simply because this is such an innocuous and constructive sounding expression, there is a danger that we may over time become a little more relaxed than we should be about taking such action. It is much better, I suggest, to confine the expression "peace-making" to diplomatic-type activity to resolve conflict and to reserve the expression "peace enforcement" to describe the always dangerous, always messy, and what should always be the last-resort, activity of applying military force.

In the study we define security problems, in more or less escalating order of seriousness, as "emerging threats", "disputes", "armed conflicts" and "other major security crises." We make the point that security is not strictly or solely a military concept and that threats to security, as many speakers in the general debate have already said, can these days come very much from factors such as exploding population pressures, environmental degradation, mass involuntary movements of people and the illicit narcotics trade, among other things.

Equally, we define possible responses to security problems, again in escalating order of severity, in terms of "peace- building," "preventive diplomacy," "preventive deployment," "peace- making," "peace-keeping," "sanctions" and "peace enforcement." We are at pains to emphasize that it is only as a last resort that security solutions should be seen as coming out of the barrel of a gun. We give much more emphasis than has been common elsewhere to the concept of "peace-building," which we define in the study as extending not just to post-conflict economic development and institution-building strategies, but to a whole variety of preventive strategies, both within particular countries and in the form of international treaty-type régimes addressing both military and non-military threats to security.

In defining criteria for embarking on peace operations - whether peace-keeping or peace enforcement - the most crucial consideration is that there be a clear-minded focus on the objectives of the exercise and the likely effectiveness of the operation in achieving those objectives. No operations of this kind should ever be embarked upon for the sake of being seen to be doing something. Although it is not always possible to analyse or predict with certainty, it should always be possible to avoid embarking on operations which are manifestly likely to be ineffective and which, as such, put at risk the most crucial United Nations resource of all, its credibility.

In the case of peace-keeping we suggest in *Cooperating for Peace* that there are seven basic conditions for ensuring an effective operation: clear and achievable goals; adequate resources; close coordination of peace-

keeping with any ongoing peacemaking activity; a capacity to be and to be seen to be absolutely impartial as between the parties who have been in conflict; a significant degree of local support for the peace-keepers; evident support for the operation from external Powers that may have been involved previously in supporting one side or the other; and a "signposted exit", that is, a clearly designated termination point, or set of termination criteria.

When it comes to peace-enforcement operations, our suggested criteria for determining involvement are quite complex and vary according to whether one is talking about an operation in response to cross-border aggression, as with Iraq and Kuwait; about one in support of peace-keeping operations, the basic rationale for United Nations involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina; or about peace enforcement in support of humanitarian objectives, as in Somalia. Without going into all the necessary detail now, I think the basic considerations always come down to the following: widespread international support; clear and achievable goals; adequate total resources to meet those goals; and clearly defined termination or review points.

If the United Nations is to play with maximum effectiveness the central role it needs to play in maintaining international peace and security, then further change, further reform in the United Nations system, really is necessary. Some of that change is bound to be painful for some people, but that is the way of change. Putting it simply and starkly: Unless the United Nations develops a comprehensive capacity to address today's and tomorrow's problems - not yesterday's - there is a very real risk of the United Nations gradually losing, with Governments and peoples around the world, the credibility it needs to survive.

In the study we identify a number of priority areas for change. The first is to restructure the Secretariat to ensure that the Secretary-General has an effective chain of command exercising authority over major United Nations operations and to consolidate and coordinate in a more orderly and manageable way the present sprawl of departments and agencies. We support the proposal that the Secretary-General create a new senior structure at United Nations Headquarters under which he would have four Deputy Secretaries-General responsible, respectively, for peace and security, economic and social operations, humanitarian operations and administration and management. Each such Deputy Secretary-General would have full executive responsibility for the operational issues falling within his or her portfolio, subject only to direction by the Secretary-General. This would be a big change, and it is not the first time it has been proposed, but it is the one that, more than anything else, would create the conditions for more orderly and effective management throughout the United Nations system.

The second priority need is to resolve once and for all the United Nations critical funding problem. Various adventurous ideas have been canvassed for external funding - money coming from sources other than Member States - and we suggest that at least one of those ideas, namely, a small levy on international airline travel, be further explored. But overwhelmingly, of course, the problem is one that has been created by Member States, including the richest of our number, and it is entirely within our ability to resolve by meeting our assessed contributions for regular budgets and peace operations in full and on time. It is an abuse of good management principles and of basic common sense to be forcing the Secretary-General to spend so much of his time pleading for debts to be honoured. In that respect I echo the sentiments expressed a few minutes ago by Mrs. Brundtland.

If the bulk of current arrears were to be paid by the end of this year, the United Nations finances would be in a quite healthy position, with the Working Capital Fund, the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund and the Special Account all replenished and the Organization in a position to meet all outstanding troop-contribution costs.

The third priority is to improve the management of peace operations, both at Headquarters and in the field. Some very significant and useful steps have already been taken in this regard in the context of the creation of the new Department of Peace-keeping Operations, but more remains to be done, including in particular the development over time of a properly constituted General Staff to plan and manage the military dimensions of such operations.

The fourth priority is to give special attention to the machinery of preventive diplomacy, again both at Headquarters and in the field. These efforts have been largely ad hoc in the past, although the Department of Political Affairs is gradually building a core of appropriate expertise. Quite apart from anything else, there is an overwhelming cost advantage in doing more to stop disputes becoming armed conflicts. We estimate the cost of keeping 100 well-qualified, experienced practitioners of preventive diplomacy in the field for a year to be $21 million; compare that with this year's peace operations budget of $3.7 billion - and compare it, moreover, with the

$70 billion that it is estimated to have cost the United Nations coalition to fight the six-week Gulf war.

The fifth priority is to rethink the whole system of humanitarian relief coordination. Despite advances that have been made with the creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, we think some basic structural problems remain. We propose that they be addressed in a radical way by the creation of a new disaster-response agency, combining the relief and basic rehabilitation functions of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme (WFP), which would work in turn directly to the suggested Deputy Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

The sixth priority, as we see it, is to take various steps to raise the profile within the United Nations system of peace-building. This is, after all, the point of intersection between the Organization's peace and security role and its economic and social role, and it should be given recognition and emphasis as such. The pursuit of peace and security has to include the satisfaction of basic human needs, as well as the direct prevention, containment and settlement of armed conflict. Much of the United Nations system is in fact already concerned with peace- building in the form of activities such as international law-making, disarmament, economic and social advancement, sustainable development, democratization and institution building. But much more can be done, organizationally, to link these activities together, to recognize their security significance, and to ensure that they are pursued with a sense of common purpose.

The remaining priority, a very large subject in itself, as we all know, is to regenerate the Security Council - not because it is now working ineffectively, but because its manifest lack of representativeness is beginning to impact upon its legitimacy. The Security Council is the linchpin of the whole United Nations peace and security system, and it is in no one's interest that its credibility should be allowed to gradually erode. The outstanding questions about the size and shape of the Council should certainly be resolved by the time of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary in 1995. This, indeed, remains an ideal target date for the achievement of a whole range of necessary organizational reforms.

Running right through the study - and underlying all the suggestions we have been making about structure and process - is a single sustaining idea, that of cooperative security. This embraces two perhaps rather more familiar ideas, common security and collective security. But the overall flavour of cooperative security can perhaps best be captured by describing it, in a little more detail, as an approach that emphasizes reassurance rather than deterrence; that is inclusive rather than exclusive; that favours multilateralism over unilateralism or bilateralism; that does not rank military solutions over non-military ones; that assumes that States are the principal actors in the security system, but also accepts that non-State actors have an important role to play; that does not particularly emphasize the creation of formal security institutions but does not reject them either; and that above all stresses the value of creating habits of dialogue.

A good deal of the spirit of cooperative security is in fact to be found in the Charter of the United Nations. Paragraph 4 of Article 1, a provision much neglected in the past, designates the United Nations as a "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" - not the sentiments of nations, but the actions of nations. In Articles 55 and 56 Member States pledge themselves to create the

> "conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations".

Underscored in that context are the promotion of higher standards of living, the solution of economic and social problems and respect for human rights.

Too often during the cold war we looked past these obligations and concerns, because we were preoccupied with military means of survival. But the threats that concerned us then no longer exist; and what was written in San Francisco, before the cold war froze our capacity to deal with many other kinds of threats to security, should now be seen as a compelling guide.

Our survival in the 1990s and beyond will depend on our developing a new understanding of what constitutes security and what contributes to it. It will depend on our capacity to think clearly about how to react to new security problems as they arise. It will depend on our willingness to rethink and to reshape our institutions, including the United Nations, so that they can cope with new realities. But, above all, it will depend on our all developing and sustaining a real commitment to cooperating for peace.

Mr. ESSY (Côte d'Ivoire) *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to pay tribute to the wisdom of the Assembly in electing Ambassador Insanally to preside over

this session, thus highlighting the outstanding role of his country, the Republic of Guyana, and beyond it that of Latin America in international relations.

I also wish to congratulate the members of the Bureau and to extend to the outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, our warm congratulations on the excellent work done during his mandate.

I should also like to reaffirm the full confidence of Côte d'Ivoire in the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. President Houphouët-Boigny, who has met him several times this year, greatly appreciates his impartiality and ability and his great devotion to his duties to the international community.

Finally, my delegation congratulates and welcomes the States admitted since the last session to our Organization, which is thus moving ever closer to its objective of universality.

Mr. Musuka (Zambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The substantial transformations that have taken place in the world since 1989 have given rise to profound changes in international relations. All the points of reference that allowed us to analyse these relations with certitude have disappeared. The new atmosphere of confidence and the spirit of understanding, and at times of solidarity, that prevail in relations between States and peoples give grounds for hope and the rapid advent of a new international order that will be more stable, more just and more able to meet the aspirations of peoples for shared happiness in a world that hungers for bread and thirsts for truth. Today's world is moving towards a convergence around certain values, including the primacy of respect for human rights, the imperative need for democracy, development and disarmament and the leading role of law in international relations. Such development can only give rise to great hopes by opening up the possibility of correcting past mistakes, sharing the benefits of progress with all and ensuring the fullness of peace.

With the beginning of real disarmament and the recent signing of the Convention banning chemical weapons, the relationship between war and peace is today undergoing a clear qualitative change. Unfortunately, however, we must recognize that the international situation is far from satisfying our hopes for justice and lasting peace.

Indeed, the collapse of the bipolar world seems, paradoxically, to have opened the door for new threats to international peace and security. The accumulation of poorly bandaged wounds, blind ambitions and feelings of rivalry and hatred built up over decades has re-emerged in various regions of the world in the form of extremely devastating and brutal fratricidal conflicts. Thus, Europe, whose level of socio-economic development did not prevent it from destroying itself twice in less than thirty years, is today still in the grip of a terrible conflict in the former Yugoslavia. That anachronistic and indescribably barbarous war has justified the creation, for the first time within the United Nations system, of an international penal tribunal, under Security Council resolution 827 (1993). So too, Africa, pushed aside by the disappearance of the bipolar world, has been torn by numerous internal conflicts with unfortunate consequences for the entire continent, which needs, rather, stability and peace within African States, between African States and between Africa and the rest of the world in order to deal with the imperative needs of its development and economic integration.

The situation in Somalia continues to be of great concern, despite the presence of the United Nations peace-keeping forces, for the spectre of anarchy, intolerance in all its forms and violence continues to hover over that country. We hope that the tireless and commendable efforts of the international community to re-establish peace in that country will, within the allotted time, lead to a positive conclusion and the reconciliation of all its sons and daughters.

We also hope to see very soon a resolution of the conflict in Liberia. Recent developments in that brotherly and neighbourly country, which led to the conclusion of the Cotonou Agreement on 25 July 1993, tend to make us more optimistic about the rapid restoration of peace.

Côte d'Ivoire has always wished fervently to see the re-establishment of peace in Liberia and has, in addition, acted along these lines, as the Yamassoukro Accords attest. We are gratified by the formation in that country of a transitional government in the form of a State council entrusted with the organization of general elections. We welcome the firm determination of the political elements in Liberia to work for the ultimate collapse of the wall of hatred and enmity between Liberian brothers and thus to lay the foundation for a future of peace and prosperity for all. In this context it is urgent that the international community commit itself further to finding the necessary means for the rapid deployment of new contingents to reinforce the Economic Community of West African States

(ECOWAS) Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia to promote the effective implementation of the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement, particularly with regard to the entry into force of the Council of State, disarmament and the cantonment of factions. It is equally urgent that the international community come to the assistance, within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter, of States or regional organizations, participating in peace-keeping efforts in Liberia. It is also necessary that the question of the delivery of humanitarian assistance be rapidly resolved to allow for the regular supply of those regions of Liberia where famine is raging in order to prevent the incursions of armed bands in search of food that attack border villages and hamlets. Here we should like to congratulate all the non-governmental organizations that are making every effort, with courage, tenacity and dedication, to save human lives in that strife-torn country.

It is also fitting to welcome the conclusion of the International Conference for the Protection of War Victims held at Geneva from 3 August to 2 September this year, organized by the Swiss Government and the International Committee of the Red Cross. That Conference allowed for a reaffirmation of the provisions of the major treaties of international humanitarian law aimed at the protection of populations during armed conflicts and for sensitizing public opinion concerning the valid bases of those provisions and the plight of civilian victims.

Concerning Angola, progress made at the outset in the application of the Bicesse peace agreements in May 1991 now needs to be maintained, and efforts must be made and encouraged, both in the Security Council and in African forums, for the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

Côte d'Ivoire knows only two paths for the settlement of conflicts: resort to force or resort to negotiation, that is to say, dialogue. Recent events in the international arena have consecrated the value of dialogue, which has always been advocated by President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, for the peaceful settlement of all conflicts. They clearly indicate how dialogue, conducted by responsible individuals, can, regardless of the nature of the conflict, serve as an extremely useful instrument for peace.

In South Africa, the recent developments in the political situation are most encouraging, despite the uncertainties of the moment resulting from the escalation of violence. For this reason we welcome with satisfaction the joint statement of the political parties of South Africa concerning their intention to organize free and democratic elections in April 1994. We also welcome the establishment of an executive transition council that, for the first time in three centuries of white domination, after the first multiracial elections will involve the black majority in political matters.

We send out an urgent appeal to those elements opposed to democratic changes in South Africa to refrain from acts likely to jeopardize the sensitive negotiation process, which would delay South Africa's return to the family of nations. We welcome the new spirit inspiring the South African leaders, particularly Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela, a spirit that led to the historic request made by the African National Congress (ANC) to the international community to lift the economic and diplomatic sanctions slapped on South Africa. We also welcome the agreement reached between the South African and Namibian Governments concerning the transfer of the port of Walvis Bay and the surrounding islands to the jurisdiction of the Namibian Government.

In the Middle East we can finally discern, after so many years of war and built-up hatred, the prospect of a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The mutual recognition of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the signing in Washington on 13 September of the historic agreement on Gaza and Jericho convince us that the process begun in the Middle East is now irreversible, despite the obstacles that might arise on the road to peace.

This is the moment to hail the courage, lucidity and self-abnegation of the high Israeli and Palestinian officials who have risen above circumstances and resolutely chosen peace. Their ardour in working for peace after such a lengthy period of war has been recognized and saluted by the international community. It is quite fitting that the members of the jury for the Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize, established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, unanimously awarded the Prize for 1993 to those illustrious leaders of Israel and Palestine.

As for the situation in the Gulf, where peace is still precarious, we reiterate our unswerving support for the full implementation of all resolutions on this conflict, particularly Security Council resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991, as well as resolution 833 (1993). We call on the parties concerned to respect these provisions. We believe that this resolution is a major asset in assuring security and stability in the region.

In Asia, we welcome the outcome of the conflict in Cambodia, where the United Nations undertook one of the most ambitious and complex peace-keeping operations it had ever conducted. We congratulate the members of the United Nations Secretariat and the States that supplied various contingents for the success of this operation, which allows world public opinion fully to appreciate this other activity of the United Nations which is too often ignored.

If the conflicts born of the cold war are now beginning to find solutions, it is none the less clear that we have entered upon a period of uncertainty, questioning and instability, with the re-emergence of a number of secondary conflicts that had been effectively frozen or repressed during the cold war and that are essentially of ethnic, tribal or religious origin, as illustrated by the wrenching events in Nagorny-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and the former Yugoslavia. It is becoming clear as well that in today's world there are fewer and fewer identifiable enemies and more and more problems that are very difficult to identify.

The United Nations remains the indispensable recourse for confronting these conflicts. Here, we solemnly wish to state our full support for the proposals of the Secretary-General contained in "An Agenda for Peace".

The strengthening of preventive action by the United Nations must prompt us to pursue the process of restructuring and revitalization of its bodies to allow it to cope with these new challenges. Given the dominant role of the Security Council in peace-keeping and international security, the question of equitable representation in that body should allow for a lengthy reflection so as to find a solution acceptable to all - in this case, the expansion of the Security Council to accord with the growth in the number of our Organization's Members and in the complexity of the problems submitted to it.

Such an expansion should be based on rigorous and objective criteria which we need to define together, bearing in mind the imperative need for effectiveness in the taking and implementation of Security Council decisions. The United Nations, as a reflection of universal values, cannot stand outside the trend towards democratization which is sweeping across the world.

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna last June, was of pivotal importance, allowing for a reaffirmation of human rights. If we can rightly be gratified by the fact that this Conference recognized the right to development as a fundamental human right to the disastrous economic situation in numerous regions of the world, and particularly in Africa, should remind us here of the need for a general awareness of the fact that human rights cannot flourish in a context of poverty and misery.

In looking back over the economic situation, we note that global economic activity in 1992 was characterized by a slow recovery, growing by only 1.1 per cent. This weak recovery is primarily the result of a moderate growth in the global production of the industrialized countries, as well as a noticeable drop in the total production of those countries which formerly had planned economies. Unfortunately, these trends continued in 1993, and thus we are seeing a rise in unemployment and the emergence of serious social tensions throughout the world.

These not very optimistic elements observed in the industrialized countries can only have negative consequences for other countries, particularly those of the developing world, among which the African countries remain the most vulnerable.

We can therefore hardly be surprised that in the last United Nations Development Programme report on human development in 173 countries, 41 of the 53 African countries are among the 50 last countries in the classification. These pessimistic conclusions were reaffirmed in the reports of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

We are aware of the causes of this serious recession. Aside from the drop in economic activities in numerous industrialized countries, those causes are the collapse of commodity prices - for minerals, mining and agriculture - and the subsequent exacerbation of the foreign-debt burden on our economies, which in turn limits our investment capability. Additional causes that should be noted are the general inadequacies in economic management as described in the World Bank study entitled "The African Capacity-Building Initiative". All these factors taken together have led to the present crisis in our countries, manifested above all by a drastic drop in economic growth and an intolerable rise in unemployment, particularly among our young people - the driving force of our countries.

The image this brief sketch of the African economic and social climate projects is hardly encouraging. In the face of such a situation, we believe that prospects for seeing the advocated solutions succeed lie primarily in a consistent approach to them.

Our States have had the political courage to embark upon deep-rooted economic reforms and our peoples have progressively become aware of the need for the adjustment effort. Thus in Côte d'Ivoire, for several years now, we have been implementing a set of measures of economic policy aimed at creating the conditions for economic recovery. The stabilization phase of this process has primarily tended towards putting our public finances on a sounder footing, which is basic to the revival of our economy and its integration into a larger collective within the region and throughout the continent.

The extension of the democratic process in Africa is evident. But it is also clear that there can be no democracy without economic development, nor genuine sustainable development without democracy. One of the primary conditions of this development for our countries is just remuneration in primary commodities - mineral, mining and agricultural.

Statistics show that Africa represents only 2 per cent of the value of world trade, and that inter-African trade represents only 5 per cent of the value of the region's total external trade. These data remind us once again of the economic urgency for Africa to achieve genuine economic integration within the continent.

In West Africa, this exercise has already begun, in particular within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose treaty has just been revised, and above all within the West African Monetary Union (WAMU), with the upcoming establishment of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

From our point of view, such an exercise in structuring and harmonizing the institutional and legal framework of economic integration should be carried out and should rapidly be extended to all regions of Africa in order to pave the way for the building of the African Common Market, which we all so wish to see.

It is also appropriate to note the great hopes we place on the establishment of the African Import-Export Bank, whose primary objectives will be to increase the level of African exports and of inter-African trade. We should also note the significant progress made in laying the groundwork for an expanded cooperation between our States in several areas, such as those of business law, the insurance industry, and the establishment of a body for regional statistics.

We wish here particularly to emphasize the extremely important role played in the area of financing by the African Development Bank in implementing the objectives of integration in Africa. We must hail the will this institution demonstrates in its efforts to establish positive correlations between actions implemented within the framework of structural adjustment programmes and the objectives of regional economic integration. This step by the African Development Bank affects the central elements of the development strategies of African countries.

It goes without saying that such integration can be implemented only in an environment which is one of peace, stability and security. We therefore welcomed the creation, within the OAU and ECOWAS, of machinery for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts.

We must recognize that our efforts at regional integration will remain futile as long as the global economic environment remains unfavourable and as long as our partners in the developed countries lack the necessary political will resolutely to tackle our countries' problems in this interdependent world of solidarity.

At a time when the marginalization of Africa is increasing, we welcome the positive initiative of the Government of Japan to hold, several days from now in Tokyo, the International Conference on African Development, which will allow the developed countries to better grasp the specific problems of Africa.

We must acknowledge, however, that any assistance offered by the international community will be only a small contribution, given the magnitude of the development needs of the African continent. This assistance will be effective only if consistent and lasting solutions are found to our problems within the framework of an international cooperation even further based on interdependence and solidarity, in particular in the areas of international trade, foreign debt, the environment, the war on drugs, and the important question of raw materials, to avoid confining our countries to the exclusive role of purveyors of raw materials and allow them also, through the transformation of these products, to become consumers in trade relations.

More specifically, the Rio Conference, by adopting Agenda 21, reached a consensus on the planetary level concerning the need for immediate and bold international cooperation in the area of sustainable development and the environment. In applying Agenda 21, Côte d'Ivoire, for its part, has established regional environmental committees to

draw up its white book on the environment, which will help it zero in on the objectives laid down in the Agenda.

In this context, the elaboration of an international convention on the struggle against desertification is of critical importance for Africa, and we continue to place our hopes in the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on that convention.

Ultimately, given the importance and complexity of the areas affecting the question of the environment, it is indispensable for the international community to openly support the development efforts of the African countries by granting them adequate financial resources and by helping them strengthen their scientific and technical capacities.

Concerning the question of drugs and its financial ramifications, the gravity of these issues requires that the international community give them serious thought. The most recent studies of this phenomenon indicate that Africa has become one of the major centres for this illegal traffic. At the same time, we note that local consumption of hard drugs, in particular heroin and cocaine, are notably increasing in numerous African countries.

This represents, therefore, a global scourge against which individual States are doomed from the outset, for the ravages of drugs spare no continent and no country, regardless of how powerful they may be.

Africa is the weak link from which the international drug trade profits. Thus, given the extreme vulnerability and the precarious nature of the means available to the African continent to combat this danger, the international community should supply - specifically through the United Nations Drug Control Programme, with which my country is fruitfully cooperating - the needed financial resources.

Since the end of the bipolar war, history has speeded up. We are the privileged witnesses of political events of the highest importance, events that will shape international relations along the lines of a rapprochement among nations and will therefore contribute to the strengthening of peace and global security, essential foundations for the building of a more just world order and one of greater solidarity.

However, despite the dynamics of peace, which promise better tomorrows, we must admit that the ideas of peace and security can no longer be limited solely to the political field, for the truth is that peace and security can be genuine only if economic development and social progress are ensured for all.

The effective globalization of the economy as well as the ever-increasing interdependence of nations today requires also an acceleration of history on the level of international economic relations, for the world must become aware of the fact that there can be no lasting peace, no universal prosperity, if the greatest part of humankind is on the sidelines of economic development and social well-being.

In such a context, therefore, the North-South dialogue must be reactivated with the goal of seeing that further means are established to eradicate underdevelopment and poverty, which today represent the greatest threat of our era. For peace does not coexist well with poverty, as President Felix Houphouët-Boigny often says.

The capability of the international community to grasp this danger and to find rapid and lasting solutions will determine our joint survival.

Mr. HANNIBALSSON (Iceland): Let me begin by congratulating the President, on his election to his high office. I wish him every success and pledge to him the full support of my delegation.

It gives me pleasure to welcome the new Member States which have joined the Organization since the beginning of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly - the new Member States of Andorra, Eritrea, the Czech Republic, Monaco, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Slovakia. With 184 Member States - and even more prospective Members - our Organization is able to claim for itself a higher degree of universality than ever.

In extending the reach of the United Nations, we serve the basic goals for which our Organization was brought into being; for the rule of law, freedom and the dignity and worth of the human person are ideals common to all men, irrespective of their cultural or geographical surroundings. But the simple reach of the United Nations must not be confused with its comprehensiveness as an institution. Therefore, as we recommit ourselves to the basic objectives inscribed in the United Nations Charter almost 50 years ago, we must also maintain the flexibility necessary to readjust our structures and working habits accordingly.

The question how to maintain the cohesiveness of the United Nations amidst the myriad - and at times conflicting - demands being made of it presents itself nowadays with particular force. Changes on the world

stage have taken place with almost dizzying speed in the last four years. The most important of those changes, the passing of the cold war, has created new opportunities for the United Nations and has raised expectations among the peoples of the world at large. At the same time, the world itself has in many ways become more unpredictable, placing serious obstacles on the path of long-term planning.

To escape this quandary, there is a need to take a balanced view of what the United Nations can and cannot be expected to do. We must moderate ambition with reality. We must not divorce the words we use from the actions we are willing to take. If we do, we may indeed succeed in building a Platonic city in speech, a United Nations which would stand only a limited chance of ever being actualized, but the down side would be to risk undermining the trust invested by the public in our Organization.

On the bright side, a number of recent developments have helped the United Nations in translating its basic vision into reality. Breakthroughs have taken place in regional conflicts which have been a thorn in the side of the international community for several decades. Governments have increasingly come to recognize the growing threat to the ecosystem of our planet. The protection of human rights is no longer seen as the exclusive domain of the nation State. Last but not least, mankind has moved further away from the brink of nuclear Armageddon.

Those are considerable accomplishments. But this is none the less hardly the time for members of the community of nations to congratulate each other. There are regions of the world where terrifying carnage is still taking place before our very eyes. Deterioration of the environment, while highly uneven in gravity and scope, is a long way from being reversed. Human-rights abuses continue in many places on an appalling scale. And while the threat of a worldwide nuclear catastrophe may have passed, there is a dangerous proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, bringing uncertainty and new instabilities in its wake. Now is clearly the time to rise above these issues that divide our Assembly and to concentrate our efforts on dealing with such challenges effectively.

The landmark peace agreement recently signed between former adversaries in the Middle East should be a source of encouragement to all nations. We are being reminded of the ancient truth that where there is sufficient devotion and will among the parties concerned, there is also a way to solve even the most intractable issues. My Government welcomes the historic accord between the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. We hope that the mutual recognition of the two parties will yield further agreements in the region, paving the way for a comprehensive peace settlement.

While paying tribute to the vision and bravery of Israeli and Palestinian leaders, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Norway on its initiative in bringing the ancient adversaries together at the same table, and I also commend the Governments of the United States and Russia for their valuable mediation. It is now up to the world community to provide the political support and the economic aid for reconstruction so vitally needed to keep the process alive. The Nordic Governments, for their part, have already decided to participate fully in that endeavour. This is a process which cannot be permitted to fail.

The world community has recently witnessed another bold step forward, which, hopefully, also marks an important contribution to international peace and stability. I am referring to the courageous statesmanship of the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, in moving decisively towards democratic elections to Parliament. As the only democratically elected representative of the Russian people, President Yeltsin deserves the vigorous support of the outside world in carrying out his far-reaching programme of reform.

A different area offering a glimmer of hope is South Africa. My Government welcomes recent progress towards genuine democracy in South Africa, including the decision to hold free and fair elections next year. The international community should now speedily heed the call of Mr. Nelson Mandela, made from this podium last week, for the removal of all economic sanctions, an action Iceland hopes will serve fully to normalize the status of South Africa in the community of nations. Iceland, for its part, has already abolished the embargo on trade with South Africa.

Sadly, we face continuation of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, not least the tragic situation prevailing in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It serves to remind us that ethnic conflicts can no longer be regarded as the sole responsibility of individual States. The inhumanity perpetrated on innocent civilians in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other former Yugoslav Republics has reached a point where the international community must act, and decisively, with all the resources provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. My Government fully

supports the negotiations sponsored by the United Nations and the European Community, and looks forward to an early agreement and implementation of the Geneva peace plan. The parties to the conflict must be brought to realize that a solution can be found only through peaceful means. Iceland also attaches importance to the effective functioning of the war crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Those responsible for atrocities must be brought to justice.

As the conflict in the former Yugoslavia has exposed the present limitations of regional structures, the United Nations has assumed responsibility for reintroducing peace and stability in the area. Meanwhile, there are outstanding examples of cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and other organizations, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Western European Union (WEU) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in the implementation of Security Council resolutions with regard to the former Yugoslavia.

In Iceland's view there is a need to develop these relationships further. Suffice it to say that NATO's readiness to employ military force for the relief of Sarajevo and for the long-term implementation of the Geneva peace plan would serve the interests of the international community and should therefore be welcomed and encouraged.

Two years ago we welcomed the three Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as sovereign Members of the United Nations. Since then the world community, and their European neighbours in particular, have reached out and offered cooperation and help in the ongoing reconstruction of those Republics. The Baltic States have, for their part, demonstrated their willingness to live up to the highest standards of democratic societies. They adhere to international instruments and are members of organizations that are fully capable of monitoring their respect for international obligations in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I should like to express my Government's hope that negotiations on the departure of all foreign military forces from Estonia and Latvia will soon be successfully concluded and a clear timetable established. The recent departure of foreign forces from Lithuania should set an example.

Restoring the environment and attaining sustainable global development are among the most challenging tasks facing the world community today. The outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro last year, has brought those tasks into sharper focus. The subsequent establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development was an important step in facilitating international cooperation for the effective follow-up and implementation of the outcome of the Conference. However, declarations, strategies and action plans are only as good as their implementation. If the credibility of the United Nations in this area is to be maintained in the wake of the Rio Conference, we must make sure to obtain real action and results.

The action programme contained in Agenda 21 of the Rio Conference provides a sound basis for our individual or joint activities aimed at sustainable development. It does not, however, cover all activities harmful to the environment, including pollution of the marine environment from land-based activities and the depletion of marine living resources in many parts of the world. While the programme contains important recommendations pertinent to these issues, the main responsibility for developing global action to protect the marine environment and to conserve its living resources has been delegated to other forums, including the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.

Iceland has participated actively in that Conference. Together with Argentina, Canada, Chile and New Zealand, Iceland has submitted a draft convention that seeks to deal on a global level with the conservation and rational management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks. Consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the draft convention calls for increased regional cooperation in the establishment of conservation and management measures and elaborates mechanisms for the enforcement of agreed measures. My Government will continue to work with all other interested Governments to achieve results at the next session of the Conference, results acceptable to all fishing nations, both distant-water States and coastal States.

As a nation overwhelmingly dependent on marine living resources, Iceland has supported efforts to establish an international regime to govern all aspects of the uses of the oceans. Iceland participated actively in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1985. Iceland believes that the Convention provides for a widely acceptable regime for the rational exploitation of the world's marine resources and establishes rules for a wide range of uses for the seas, thereby reducing the potential for conflict among States in this field.

The Government of Iceland is greatly encouraged by the results of the most recent round of consultations, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, directed at addressing problems which have prevented certain industrialized countries from becoming parties to the Convention. We are hopeful that at the next round agreement will be reached on the framework of negotiations which will enable the early entry into force of the Convention with universal participation.

As early as 1989 Iceland emphasized in this forum the need for a new international instrument, an "Earth Charter", which would define the responsibilities and rights of nations with respect to the environment. My Government regrets that an agreement on such a charter was not reached before the Rio Conference. We would therefore strongly support transforming the Rio Declaration into an "Earth Charter" before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations two years hence.

All nations have an obligation not only to protect and preserve the environment, but also to promote human rights and foster social and economic progress. The United Nations Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna last June was a world event of major significance. The results of the Conference, especially when seen in the context of improvements in the international political climate in the recent past, give us reason to hope for a more effective implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms everywhere.

For the first time ever it appears that the majority of countries in the world now pledge allegiance to the principles of democratic rule of law. Still, we are confronted with breaches of human rights all around the world. In the follow-up to the Conference on Human Rights, we must address such breaches squarely and focus attention on ensuring greater respect and accountability by Governments for the protection of human rights. This means, among other things, devoting more resources to this field as a reflection of the political commitment of Member States. Increased resources are required if the Centre for Human Rights is to be able to provide effective advisory services and human-rights monitoring. At the same time, Iceland would like to support the establishment of the post of high commissioner for human rights.

The determination of our countries to promote social progress and better standards of life is an important commitment embedded in the United Nations Charter. Iceland hopes that the world summit in 1995 will serve to bring issues of social development into sharper focus and highlight, in particular, the plight of the more than one billion people living below the absolute poverty line.

In this connection, I would like to draw special attention to the growing problem of world population control, which could have serious social, economic and environmental repercussions if not properly managed in the decades ahead. Around 90 per cent of the predicted world population growth between now and the end of the first quarter of the twenty-first century is expected to occur in the developing countries, placing enormous new strains on their resources. Against this background, the decision to convene an international conference on population and development in Cairo next year is to be welcomed.

To stimulate social development, we need, among other things, economic growth. The liberalization of world trade is the single most important vehicle for world economic growth. The growing importance of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is clearly manifested in the flood of new accessions and the overriding importance attached to the Uruguay Round by the Governments of the world. Since the end of the cold war, GATT has achieved an even greater role in international relations; countries in transition see it as a vital venue for their relations with each other and for their integration into the world economy. In the last few years political walls between cultures and nations have been demolished. Trade barriers must not, however, be allowed to replace iron curtains.

Economic reform, the environment, job-creation and investment, to name but a few, are issues that affect and are affected by international trade. A successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, which now seems to be within reach, would dramatically improve our ability to deal with those problems through international cooperation and trade. A failure, on the other hand, would be a fatal blow to the multinational trading system and to GATT. Protectionism would again raise its ugly head and conflicts would erupt, with disastrous consequences for the world economy.

GATT's business is therefore the world's business. The Uruguay Round represents a tremendous opportunity to revitalize world trade. All countries stand to gain from this. The biggest gain will accrue to the developing countries and to economies in transition. We who are gathered here at the General Assembly representing the citizens, our countries' consumers, cannot and must not allow special-interest groups to block the negotiations in

the few strenuous final steps needed to reach the goal before the end of this year.

Issues of social and economic development, of human rights and of environmental protection are part and parcel of the notion of extended security, which we are all getting accustomed to in the aftermath of the cold war. Arms control remains, however, a very important element of post-cold-war security. The success achieved in nuclear- and conventional-arms control in recent years represents a historical turning-point which must be exploited for the long-term advancement of global peace and stability. Here, the United Nations is singularly well placed to assume a more active role. This applies to both global perspectives and support for regional initiatives.

The systematic acquisition of nuclear warheads, ballistic missiles, and chemical and biological weapons by a number of States is a matter of serious concern to the international community. Non-proliferation should be given priority and efforts made to ensure that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is both universally adhered to and indefinitely extended. It is also to be hoped that the present moratorium on nuclear testing will eventually be succeeded by a comprehensive and verifiable test ban.

Peace-keeping operations are among the areas where the Organization has enjoyed considerable success. The result is that Member States have placed increasing demands on the Organization. However, the time has now come to review the activities of the United Nations in this field. The goal must be to ensure that peace-keeping operations serve the purpose for which they were intended and that their mandates are specific and more limited in time. In this connection, the idea of a United Nations stand-by force that would enable the United Nations to act swiftly when crises arise should be carefully considered. The existence of such a force would enhance the credibility of and respect for the Organization. Meanwhile, Member States must live up to their current obligations and pay their assessed contributions to peace-keeping operations in full and on time.

At the outset of my speech I referred to the need for the United Nations to be responsive to change. Since the last review of the membership of the Security Council took place, there has been a substantial increase in the number of States Members of the United Nations. At the same time the Council has, especially in recent years, increasingly assumed the role envisaged for it in the relevant provisions of the Charter. The time is therefore ripe to review the Council's membership. The goal of such a review must be to make the Council more representative and thus, indeed, more effective.

I would like to welcome initiatives taken recently to streamline the structure of the United Nations and to make its daily operations and management more effective. This is necessary in particular in order for the Organization to regain the trust of its Member States. In this connection, Iceland favours the establishment of a permanent office of inspections and investigations and hopes that such an office will help to ensure that allegations of fraud, waste and corruption are investigated expeditiously.

Now, more than ever, there is an opportunity for the United Nations to adapt to the positive political developments of the recent past and to revamp its structures from within. Let us join forces in building a stronger United Nations, a United Nations which embodies the ideals of its founders and remains at the same time responsive to the basic needs of people everywhere.

Mr. SILVA CIMMA (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I am particularly pleased to congratulate Ambassador Insanally on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly, which does honour to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. We know that he has long-standing close personal ties to Chile.

It has been our lot to witness and to be a part of events of far-reaching significance in the history of mankind. The political, technological, economic and social changes that have shaken the world over the past 10 years are beginning to take root, and as they do so the enormous influence they have had on the establishment of new forms of behaviour, new values and new institutional schemes is becoming apparent.

The maintenance of democracy as the single paradigm has brought with it beneficial influences, although for some the establishment of this system of coexistence has given rise to upheavals which are not yet over. But we can afford a measure of realistic optimism if we fix our attention on other developments. The beginnings of an agreement between Palestinians and Israelis are a tangible example of this. Another is the awakening of South Africa to true democracy. The spirit of consensus that is beginning to spread throughout the world is a consequence of the democratic paradigm. Against this new backdrop, the United Nations has a vital role to play.

At this juncture, then, there are grounds for optimism, and we have a duty to be optimistic. For only in being optimistic will we be able to overcome the reluctance of some and the temptation of others to take refuge in fundamentalism. It is also imperative for us to take a firm stand against a kind of rigidity of approach which is gaining ground in the world. This is the tendency to treat systems as if they were incontrovertible truths. It is the transfer of dogma to sciences that are not at all exact. And this is happening at a time when advances in human knowledge are demonstrating precisely that what is vital today is to open our minds to reason and to distance ourselves as far as possible from dogmatism.

We are living in a world which has ceased to be foreign. No human reality is alien to us. No suffering is remote. No triumph of intelligence is a private matter. But globalization does not mean uniformity. What is more, without respect for differences, it would cease to have the vigour it exhibits today. Its competitiveness would be lost, and the concept of one world would inevitably find itself on its deathbed.

This is the world in which we have to live and move, a world plagued by disturbing yet, paradoxically, stimulating contradictions. It is in such a world that we must strive to seize the opportunity to take positive initiatives, without prejudices, and come closer to the innermost reality of man. This is why we are now striving to make progress in the defence of universal humanitarian law. This concept is inherent in the new vision of the world, and Chile comes forward as its most resolute proponent. It is this concept which has led the "Blue Helmets" in the past three years to take on as many missions as they conducted between the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the 1990s. The United Nations troops serve the invaluable objective of peacemaking and rebuilding coexistence, a task which we must perform if we are to meet adequately the need to strike the proper balance between local sensitivity and global sensitivity.

The number of problems that are worldwide in scope has greatly increased. Whether through rigidity in the application of the system or through shortcomings in the system itself, we are witnessing some tragic consequences. Millions of human beings are suffering from poverty. Nor is the tragedy confined to the poor nations. We are witnessing a worldwide social crisis. It has left its mark on the developed countries as well. Social marginalization is a reality which has taken on truly disturbing dimensions hitherto unknown in those latitudes.

Chile's present Government has always viewed economic development as inseparable from social development. We see the economy not as an end in itself, but as a means by which humanity can attain happiness. This is our objective, and this is what has led President Patricio Aylwin to assign the priority to dealing with what we have termed the social debt. This term encompasses the recognition that society as a whole must accord to the poor. This idea has gained ground. As a result, the Chilean initiative regarding the convening of a world summit for social development has been positively received. The meeting, to be held at Copenhagen in 1995, will be a tangible demonstration of this concern on the part of the United Nations.

My country is confident that we will make every effort necessary to ensure that the Copenhagen meeting arrives at appropriate and specific solutions. The environment is favourable, which makes us feel that we shall be able to conclude the summit with an "agenda or programme for people", one essential element of which must be broader, more effective and more united international cooperation.

Today's world poses questions which must be answered without delay. Poverty, hunger and other social scourges are perceived as aberrations. Their eradication is the task of the international community as a whole. In this task, the United Nations will play a decisive role. It has the capacity to take the leadership, which means channelling international cooperation.

Furthermore, we recognize that the United Nations has a fundamental role to play in dealing with the relevant issues.

In the specific field of international peace and security, my country has repeatedly stressed its support for the action taken by the Secretary-General, and Chile advocates the strengthening of his role, particularly with respect to preventive diplomacy. We hail his report "An Agenda for Peace" as a valuable and significant aid to Governments. We look forward with interest to the forthcoming publication of an agenda for development, which we intend to consider with the greatest enthusiasm.

In the same spirit of cooperation, we have conveyed to the Secretary-General suggestions regarding the benefits that might derive from an increase in the number of members of the Security Council. Because of the great importance of that body, any change that is proposed should reflect the very clear political will of the majority.

I want to put great emphasis on this point. We view the changes in the Security Council as part of a wide-ranging exercise aimed at strengthening the United Nations. No reform can be viable if its sole aim is to grant some degree of political recognition to certain emerging Powers. The aim of our proposal is that appropriate account be taken of the new international reality. At the same time, it seeks to reflect the increase in the membership of the Organization since the last time the Council was enlarged.

In our suggestions to the Secretary-General, we indicate the need for the reform to result in a limited membership. This will enable us to ensure efficiency and to achieve our objectives of democratization. In this context, we feel that it is important that the various regions of the world be duly represented. This will enable us to combine the idea of democratization with the balance that is essential.

Regarding the right of veto, we agree with many nations that this is not a democratic means of decision-making. For this reason we wish to make it clear that we are opposed to its being extended to new permanent members of the Council. In line with these ideas, Chile has raised the possibility of the Council's comprising permanent members, permanent members without the right of veto, regional members with an extended term, and non-permanent members.

Still in the context of the protection of democracy, we cannot fail to mention that at the regional level too new circumstances have led to changes in the instruments available to the Organization of American States (OAS). Clear evidence of this is the Santiago "Commitment to democracy and the renewal of the inter-American system" approved at the General Assembly of the OAS held in the capital of Chile in 1991. This new approach has already yielded results. The OAS has achieved successes that would previously have been impossible in the region - particularly in the field of the protection of democracy and human rights.

Of concern to us, together with steps in these two sensitive areas, is decisive action for the protection of nature. Currently, Chile holds the chairmanship of the environment commission established within the organization.

In addition, my country has joined in the effort to combat drug trafficking. Accordingly, we support various initiatives aimed at drafting new legal instruments to combat this scourge effectively.

Likewise - returning to the world scene - we attach special importance to the process of restructuring in the economic and social sector. This will raise the possibility of saving millions of human beings who are currently marginalized, living in minimal security conditions. In our view, cooperation for development should become one of the most solid pillars of the international agenda for the twenty-first century. We shall continue to put forward ideas and to support initiatives, in the Group of 77 and any other body, that will serve to advance the negotiations.

President Aylwin's Government has striven to make international cooperation a reality. We have participated in various activities within the programme of technical cooperation between developing countries. Currently, we have projects in 43 countries, and 70 institutions from the public and private sectors are participating in them.

There is an active current of cooperation with our neighbours in Central America, the Caribbean and South America. Also under way are projects that link us with Mexico. Similarly, we have programmes with the People's Republic of China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Recently, contacts have been established with African countries and with South Pacific island territories. All of this forms part of a deliberate policy aimed at strengthening links with the Latin American and Caribbean nations and at establishing close ties with all developing countries.

An outstanding feature of the major changes taking place throughout the world is the important role being assumed by the Pacific basin in political, economic and strategic terms. Chile is a coastal State of that ocean, and our identification with the basin is one of the most innovative elements in the foreign policy being pursued by President Aylwin. We have made a sustained effort to associate ourselves with the main agreements on cooperation in the Facific region. Since 1990, Chilean business has been participating actively in the Pacific Basin Economic Council, and since 1991 Chile has been a full member of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. We hope also to join the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, as we view this as an important means of promoting the liberalization of regional and world-wide trade. In this effort we have received valuable support from the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and for this we are grateful.

In another context, I cannot fail to take this opportunity to mention an issue that is of special significance to the developing world. I refer to the

Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The renewal of these negotiations provides some grounds for hope. The so-called Dunkel text is very far from meeting our legitimate aspirations, although it does constitute a major advance in the current situation. Unfortunately, nonetheless, it embodies a number of limitations on genuine freedom of trade.

The most difficult issue in the Uruguay Round has been trade in agricultural products, which, for the nations of Latin America -for developing countries in general - is of vital importance. Hence our lively interest in what is happening in GATT. Insistence on intransigent positions, which objectively impede world trade, creates insurmountable barriers to development - a situation to which we cannot remain indifferent.

Chile has fully discharged its commitment to the collective security system. We regard this United Nations initiative as highly appropriate in the current international situation. My country has participated in a number of peace-keeping operations. It has sent military observers to the Middle East and to the frontier between India and Pakistan; police officers to El Salvador; air force personnel to Kuwait; and army personnel to Cambodia.

In discussing this issue, we cannot overlook the financing difficulties that peace-keeping operations are facing. We support the steps being taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to overcome these problems.

Unquestionably, however, in our view, any discussion of peace is incomplete if it does not refer to the progress made in relation to disarmament. The Convention on chemical weapons is a significant achievement. We trust that the work initiated with a view to the signing of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty will follow the same course.

At this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, I wish briefly to evaluate the results Chile has achieved in some of the areas to which it attaches priority in the restoration of democracy.

Let me refer first to our reintegration into the international community. In the multilateral sphere, we can point to the generous support of our peers, which has enabled us to become members of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, the International Law Commission and the Executive Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and to the election of our Ambassador to the United Nations, Juan Somavia, as President of the Economic and Social Council and Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit for Social Development.

In keeping with its mandate, President Aylwin's Government sees human rights as another of the objectives towards which its actions are directed, both domestically and in foreign policy. The latter aspect reflects a traditional position of our country: that of encouraging respect for international law and promoting peace and justice. At the same time, however, it is the least we can do by way of reciprocating the enormous solidarity the international community has extended to the Chilean people at the most difficult moment in its history.

It will be the task of the General Assembly at this session to begin the implementation of the agreements contained in the Plan of Action adopted at the second World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna at the beginning of this year.

Along with its re-emergence on the international scene and its protection of human rights and democracy, Chile has set itself the goal of working for effective regional integration.

Here, too, we can point to major achievements. Our relations with our Latin American and Caribbean brothers could not be better. Agreements that have already been signed and various others that are in the drafting stage - some 220 agreements and treaties in four years - bear witness to this fact.

To that same end, we have worked for the strengthening of the Rio Group; we currently have the honour to be coordinating its temporary secretariat. That institution is the embodiment of a modern approach to international relations. It embodies the will of the region in its relations with individual countries or groups of countries outside the region. This forum for political consensus already has significant achievements to its credit on various levels. Moreover, it is a clear demonstration of what we can aspire to if we manifest imagination, political openness and realism.

Special mention needs to be made of the understanding we have reached with our neighbours. The understanding, generosity and vision of the future exhibited by the Heads of State of Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and Chile have allowed us to settle issues which in some cases

had been dragging on for more than a century. While respecting our respective traditions and abiding by the inviolable principles of international law, including non-intervention and the sanctity of treaties as the source of rights, we have nevertheless understood that, as the twenty-first century approaches, it will be useful to exchange ideas about our national aspirations, inasmuch as they promote the maintenance of peace.

It is a great honour for me to be addressing the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The four years I have represented Chile in this important forum, whether accompanying President Aylwin or personally, have been an enriching experience.

The period in which we have the good fortune to be living demands increasingly dynamic and effective responses. The world is moving towards a new structure which will undoubtedly afford us the possibility of moving ever closer to satisfying the needs of human beings. But whether we can make this a reality will depend on the intelligence with which we confront the future.

I have every confidence in the rich sap that nourishes this spreading tree, which shelters us all. The United Nations has before it a glorious future in working for the cause of peace. But that future will be possible only if we demonstrate the imagination to be bold, the knowledge to move ahead, the love to understand that to strive for the common good is always a viable option, the solidarity to be more human and the wisdom not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Members of the Assembly, my good wishes go with you.

Mr. ABDOU BOLOCK ABDOU (Djibouti) *(interpretation from French)*: I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Insanally on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I am confident that his great experience and wisdom will guarantee the success of this session.

I wish also to pay a tribute to the President of the forty-seventh session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his significant achievements and his constant, unfailing commitment to the work of the Assembly.

Let me pay a well-deserved tribute also to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a man ready to face any challenge and an ardent champion of human rights, for the masterly and enlightened way in which he is heading the Secretariat of the Organization. My country appreciates the tireless efforts of the office of the Secretary-General as it strives to keep the peace throughout the world.

I take great pleasure in welcoming the States that have just become Members of the United Nations, particularly Eritrea, which by dint of courage, self-denial and sacrifice has regained its dignity and its place in the great family of independent States.

The opening of a new session of the General Assembly gives us an opportunity to share our thoughts on important world events and to mark a line of collective conduct in human affairs. The most striking trend over the past few years, one which has borne fruit, is that of the protection of human rights vis-à-vis the State. This ideology of human rights and minority rights has been decisive: today, evils that had plagued the international community have disappeared or are disappearing, for example the seemingly unbridgeable ideological gap between East and West, the situation in South Africa, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Entire regions see the possibility of releasing significant intellectual and material resources which were once devoted to preparing for conflict but which now can be used to establish genuine, welcome peace.

We must hail the courage of visionary leaders who, fighting against the current, have dared to challenge those who saw security concerns as the only political wisdom and to blaze new trails for their peoples and for the world.

The sight of the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Prime Minister of Israel signing their historic agreement in Washington, D.C., and shaking hands with each other has been for many of us a source of hope, inspiration and the will to persevere. They deserve our praise for having recognized each other and engaged in dialogue, thereby taking the first step down the long road that we must now follow to arrive at a viable and lasting peace.

That courageous decision shows all those who refuse to speak save through the voices of their guns that it is still possible to break free from the grip of hatred and denial of each other's existence. The process that has been set in motion in the search for a comprehensive and lasting settlement must of necessity be based on Security Council

resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). It deserves the full political and financial support of the international community.

In an equally explosive context, the white minority regime of South Africa has embarked on a process of political reform by signing an agreement for provisional power sharing with the country's black majority. That crucial measure will have a lasting effect on the political stability, economic progress and prosperity both of that country and the entire region.

This development represents a threat to the extremist and intransigent minorities, which threaten chaos and anarchy if their demands are not met. However, we are convinced that the Government of South Africa and the African National Congress, acting in a spirit of openness and compromise, will oppose any concession or half measure that might jeopardize the long march towards a multiracial and egalitarian society. In that connection, we support the appeal made by Mr. Mandela that the economic sanctions imposed upon his country be lifted to facilitate the transition to democratic rule.

Unfortunately, South Africa is not the only battlefield for extremists. We must recognize that Mozambique, Somalia, Bosnia and Angola, to mention but a few, are still the victims of fratricidal conflicts. What we are witnessing is a phenomenon that was long contained and suppressed by the antagonisms that existed between the two power blocs during the cold-war period, when super-Power pressures were so great that satellite countries were often employed as intermediaries in the settlement of accounts. As a result, internal conflicts were promptly nipped in the bud. Today, the concept of two blocs is no longer valid, and conflagrations are breaking out almost everywhere. Unfortunately, the task of dealing with these hotbeds of conflict has fallen to the United Nations, and, as a result, all nations must now participate in one way or another in the activities of the Organization.

We are convinced that there are other ways of halting the renewed outbreak of such conflicts than through a systematic recourse to force. Naturally, violations of international law and human values and the ever-increasing contempt for human life are of central concern to the international community. However, we must recognize that the United Nations is suffering from inadequate structures, from poor organization and from a lack of financing, as well as from a personnel shortage that renders it impotent to deal with such situations. It is therefore vitally important that the Organization be provided with the financial and human resources it needs to remedy its shortcomings.

My Government believes that the United Nations should have its own volunteer rapid-deployment force under Security Council control and the command of the Secretary-General, prepared to be deployed at any time in hotbeds of tension, for we are constantly being made aware that the best method of dealing with conflicts is to prevent them. We believe in preventive diplomacy. Such a force should be trained and armed for limited and defensive actions and provided with a logistical support capable of dealing with any eventuality.

However, we are aware of the difficulties such a force would face. The principle of humanitarian intervention would conflict with the notion of State sovereignty, but at the present juncture the United Nations is still the only available "fire department," if I may use that term. It is thus high time that its finances were put in order, even if that entailed granting it the power to seek access to other sources of financing, while reinforcing integrity and austerity through the establishment of a general inspection body.

Apart from those financial questions, we believe that the United Nations system also needs reform. The Security Council should be expanded by the addition of a permanent member for each region, thus modifying the monopoly on the right of the veto. Indeed, the United Nations must be perceived as an international body that expresses the concerns of every sovereign country and in which transparency and globalization prevail.

All of those questions arise each time the Organization intervenes in a given conflict. In Somalia, in Angola, in Mozambique, the Organization has suffered from its inability to mobilize the military personnel required for the scheduled period, to such an extent that its mission finds itself at a standstill. In Angola a tragic situation exists owing to the Organization's inability to disarm the combatants. Fortunately, in Mozambique a spirit of compromise has prevailed over deadly passions. As for Somalia, the United States initiative under the auspices of the Unified Task Force has made it possible to avoid an unprecedented disaster.

The United Nations experience in Somalia is far from the negative one it is casually described as being. A mission designed to ensure a safe environment and the distribution of humanitarian aid has achieved remarkable progress. Hunger exists only in a few remote areas,

violence is sporadic and limited but controlled. Training centres and hospitals have been opened, and there are signs that business is beginning to pick up. Political reconciliation meetings have been held by the clan leaders in various parts of the country, and the creation of a basic political framework, the district council, is well under way. We can confidently look forward to the groundroots development of the regional council that will elect future political leaders. Somalians are participating to a greater degree in the development process of planning, identifying and setting priorities.

We believe that the police services and judicial system that will soon be re-established will be capable of assuming a large part of the responsibilities for the maintenance of order and security in Somalia.

As a result, we would reiterate our appeal to donors to fulfil the financial commitments they have made to the Organization, because the complete success of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) will depend on it. Should they fail to do so, the procrastinations and failings of UNOSOM II will be a great encouragement to the so-called warlords, skilled as they are in clan violence, and destroy any chance of the development of democracy and the rule of law.

We would also recall that in its initial desire to bring about the prompt restoration of political structures the Organization agreed to work with the elements that were available, which gave the Somali "hawks" an exaggerated idea of their own importance. It is vital that such detractors be stripped of their ability to do harm, so that true democracy can be established. In our opinion, that is the only way to avoid getting stuck in a rut of passivity, as has occurred in the United Nations experience in Bosnia, where the worst violations of basic human rights have merely given rise to expressions of indignation or verbal condemnations, apart from a few resolutions that have remained a dead letter while extortions and "ethnic cleansing" continue, in defiance of international law.

In addition, the excessive delay in setting up the War Tribunal has only aggravated the morbid passivity of the international community. Nevertheless, we are hopeful that that Tribunal will soon begin to hold sessions, with the personnel, powers, funding and cooperation of Member States that will be vital to its effective operation. We are stressing this point because we deplore the policy of double standards being pursued by the United Nations, a policy that allows the criminals in Bosnia to operate with impunity while mercilessly pursuing others elsewhere in the world. This unquestionably discredits United Nations activities and exposes collective security to the insatiable appetites of aggressors and warlords of all kinds.

When resolutions are adopted, the United Nations must ensure that they are respected and complied with, or "collective security" will come to mean "selective security".

Unfortunately, ethnic and community conflicts are not the only threats to world peace. The poverty of the countries of the third world, compounded by artificial borders inherited from the colonial era, constitutes another catalyst for conflict, because this completely misguided carve-up created territorial entities that are scarcely economically viable. These countries, once buffer States for the super-Powers, have become veritable arsenals, and, with the added element of poverty, the regimes in power thus tend to opt more often for force than for reason.

In the face of so many constraints, building a prosperous and harmonious nation with a common identity and inspired by the values and principles of democracy has been a daunting challenge. Many developing countries embroiled in internal strife and turmoil have become bogged down in chaos, leading to the disintegration of the State. Hence, populations fleeing these regions invade such countries as Djibouti, which is currently groaning under the burden of 130,000 refugees, equivalent to 23 per cent of its population.

We bear this immense burden nevertheless, because, in the end, the only driving force of the great global village that the world has become is interdependence. Thus, assistance to developing countries should be increased, as should the provision of skills and technology through multilateral cooperation. Furthermore, we believe that regional economic integration is the basis for continuing progress and lasting prosperity.

With the emergence of important regional economic blocs, our countries are threatened with marginalization. In the context of economic stagnation, the great hope born of the end of the cold war has gone up in smoke. We are still awaiting the extra resources that might have been allocated to development. Worse still, the commitment of developed countries to contribute 0.7 per cent of their gross national product - a modest goal set by the United Nations for development aid - has been met by only two countries. The others have barely managed to achieve 0.2 per cent at the most.

Despite a difficult and sometimes chaotic situation, a number of developing countries have made substantial progress and present the necessary conditions to benefit from significant and ongoing assistance, while others are regarded as insolvent by international lending institutions.

It is obvious that we desperately need increased multilateral and bilateral aid to enable us to meet our budgetary and investment needs because our private sources of investment have dwindled. To this gloomy picture we must add the misappropriation of aid or mismanagement of it. Nevertheless, many countries have committed themselves to economic reform and structural readjustment, which require increased aid, especially from the international financial institutions.

My country, responding to the rapid developments taking place in international trade and navigation - the bases of our economy - has revamped its port facilities, financial services and communication networks.

Anxious not to sail against what has been called the wind of democracy, we have undertaken political reforms, elections have been held and a new Constitution has been adopted defining and guaranteeing individual rights.

Despite a very hostile and very unstable regional environment, Djibouti has always been an island of stability and a safe haven. The ill effects of the deep turmoil in our region have considerably weakened the Republic of Djibouti, and the deployment of enormous quantities of armaments in the region has not helped to maintain a peaceful climate and environment.

Thus, the Republic of Djibouti will come to have its own share of political troubles, a natural extension of regional instability. But these troubles will be contained, because Djibouti will strengthen its nation by discouraging violence.

Such are the road taken and the commitment made by the Republic of Djibouti to preserve and strengthen peace at home and throughout the world.

Mr. SERREQI (Albania): I deem it a special pleasure and honour to extend my cordial congratulations to the President on his election to preside over the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I also wish to express my high esteem for the excellent way in which the former President, Mr. Ganev, presided over the proceedings of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

May I hail the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and in particular for his dynamic role and valuable personal contribution.

The Albanian delegation takes this opportunity to greet the six newest Member States. In particular, we welcome the presence here of our neighbour, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, whose stability, territorial integrity and international recognition are of great importance for stability in the Balkans.

Since the last session of the General Assembly we have seen many important events. We have witnessed the endeavours of peoples for progress, prosperity, harmony and understanding, peace and cooperation, as well as for survival. The end of the cold war paved the way for the attainment of the peoples' denied aspirations to self-determination and national identity, democracy and equality. It brought their national and spiritual assets closer to each other and enhanced their endeavours to occupy their rightful place in the list of civilized nations of the world.

But these endeavours were also accompanied by crises and conflicts, which have grown and are now among our most serious challenges. We hail with the greatest pleasure today the impressive progress made by Israel and the PLO, as manifested in the historic agreement to put an end to years and years of hostility. This remarkable achievement is the best proof that if willingness is shown by all parties, a suitable and acceptable solution can always be found. This is the right moment to recall the worthy contribution made by the major actors in world diplomacy to this end and express our conviction that with such a commitment they will continue to deal with other similar crucial questions.

At last year's session of the General Assembly the Albanian delegation had the pleasure to declare in this Hall the victory of the democratic forces and their commitment to Albania's reintegration into the community of democratic and civilized nations. Today, from the same rostrum, I have the honour and the obligation to state that my country's democratic transformation has been successful, embracing all fields and spheres of human activity. This transformation has once and for all determined the direction in which Albanian society will go, and it is forging ahead fast. After more than a year of such government, Albania has taken big steps in the setting up of qualitatively new political and social structures and institutions, as well as in the observation and legal guarantee of the rights and freedoms of individuals.

We can truly speak now of an overall democratic restructuring of Albanian society. Our goal is to consolidate the constitutional democratic political order by setting up democratic institutions with a view to taking action on various political subjects and non-governmental organizations with a view to guaranteeing participation by all citizens in the running of the country. Albania is being led by people possessed of new aspirations, ideologies and ideas. The Government and its programme enjoy general approval, which ensures political stability at home.

Making headway in Albania along with general democratic reform is economic reform, aimed at a total restructuring of a closed and inefficient economy on the path to a free and open market economy. This restructuring is difficult and truly painful, given the conditions of a country that had known no reform or any kind of cooperation. The economic recession the world is experiencing today has a considerable bearing on the outcome of reform in Albania. Furthermore, the strict implementation of United Nations sanctions, and the considerable economic losses consequent upon it, have influenced the rhythm of Albania's economic recovery. To be successful, Albanian economic policy also counts on assistance and cooperation through programmes of such important world economic institutions as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Community, and on specific programmes of aid and cooperation with member countries of that Community and a number of other States. Albania has surpassed the stage of emergency aid and is working intensively to carry out capital-producing projects, in which an important role is also played by United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund. In spite of the fact that the Government has been in power for only a short time, positive results are evident.

Application of a strict monetary policy has reduced inflation from a monthly rate of 15 per cent in 1992 to 0.9 per cent in March 1993. Since August of last year, the Albanian currency has shown a fairly fixed exchange rate in relation to hard currencies, and the budgetary deficit has been reduced significantly. As result of the massive privatization of agricultural land, production has increased by 25 per cent.

It is only natural that at this time Albania has to cope not only with the difficulties of transition and world economic recession, but with those caused by the long war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other complex political developments in the region, which negatively affect our efforts to restore our ruined economy and hinder the promotion of the democratic process not only in Albania but in the entire Balkan region. We consider the creation of a democratic space and a climate of peace, security and stability in the former Yugoslavia and all over the Balkans to be factors of decisive importance for the future of this region, which has been overburdened with so many conflicts. We are resolved to contribute constructively to the establishment of such a democratic space of peace, understanding and cooperation among the Balkan countries.

The priority of Albanian foreign policy is the creation of favourable conditions for the democratic transformation and total revival of the country. We see the solution of all our problems precisely in the creation of this democratic space in the Balkans and the full incorporation of this region in the European process of integration. In this context, Albania's permanent political goal remains step-by-step and overall integration in Europe by encouraging parallel cooperation with the European collective economic, political and security forums and structures. Reliable guarantees of accelerated integration are advanced democratic legislation worked out in compliance with European standards and the institutional restructuring of State administration and local government, along with total privatization of the economy and the general encouragement of local and foreign private initiative and activity in Albania. Reference should also be made at this point to direct assistance from an important forum of European democracy, the Council of Europe.

Albania regards the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as an institution of effective vitality, which is indispensable to organized concrete inter-State cooperation towards a real collective security system in Europe and the entire Euro-Atlantic area. Our relations with this important political and military organization for security in Europe are intended to constantly enhance cooperation towards full integration in its structures. In close cooperation with other Euro-Atlantic institutions, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council also have a very important role to play in safeguarding peace, not only through confidence-building measures and increased understanding among the participating states, but also in the prevention of conflicts and the peaceful settlement of disputes. We are confident that only a common security policy is conducive to a climate of mutual confidence, capable of coping with new challenges. Through the position we have expressed at these forums, Albania has proved that it consistently abides by this assessment.

The protection and observance of human rights, one of the fundamental issues of the new world democratic order today, are closely linked with stable development, democratic transformation, political stability and international security, especially of the underdeveloped and turbulent regions of the world. Human rights are indissolubly interwoven with the aspirations of mankind to well-being and socio-economic and political progress, freedom and democracy. It is imperative for all members of the international community at present to commit themselves, according to their respective domestic conditions, to joint efforts to translate these aspirations into reality for the sake of a civilized and advanced world. The Albanian people, who will never forget the high price paid during half a century of brutal dictatorship, attaches a high value to human rights and political and civil freedoms. In compliance with this assessment, our Government considers support for democracy and human rights to be the guide of its political orientation. It is determined to build a modern State and a civilized society, based on respect for the human rights of all strata of the population without exception or discrimination. Albania has adhered to two basic United Nations pacts on human rights and is making preparations to adhere to a series of other conventions. Not long ago, for the first time in the history of the country, the Albanian Parliament endorsed the Constitutional Law on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, thereby testifying to our determination to put human rights at the forefront of the stable foundations of the new Albanian democratic society we are building.

We consider respect for minority rights to be an important and indivisible aspect of human rights. Albania's policy in this field rests on the principles of full equality and non-discrimination, the creation of a broad democratic space so that persons belonging to national minorities can assert their own national identity, and the creation of a climate of exemplary trust and coexistence. Minorities are an integral part of the political, social and economic life of Albania; as protagonists of the democratic development and transformation of the country, they have access to real representation in all socio-political structures, at State and local levels of administration. Their situation in economic and social domains will improve hand in hand with that of the rest of the population.

The end of the cold war freed mankind from the fear of global confrontation, even though peace and security are still seriously threatened by a number of regional conflicts. In some regions of the world, the actions and practices of some States where totalitarian and ultranationalist regimes are in power run counter to the aspirations and endeavours of the peace-loving international community. More than 30 armed conflicts, accompanied by savage crimes and great suffering for the civilian population, are currently ablaze in various regions of the world. These conflicts, which are a flagrant violation of human rights and which are attended by all the inevitable consequences, have seriously shocked mankind.

The conflict in the former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is the bloodiest and most dangerous conflict known in Europe since the Second World War, has not yet found a stable solution. The monstrous massacres carried out against the innocent civilian population, "ethnic cleansing" - that barbaric form of genocide - and all the other inhuman acts associated with this conflict have once more testified to the fact that it is impossible to reform totalitarian and ultra-nationalist societies. This conflict is a challenge to civilized Europe, to the conscience and humanitarian sentiments and passions of the whole of peace-loving mankind. That is why a firm collective answer from mankind is required. We have seen that the imposition of sanctions, despite the effect on the Serbian economy, was not the only or the most effective means to put an end to the war and restore peace. This is because the practical commitment of some countries did not match their verbal statements in support of the sanctions. That is why sanctions failed to paralyse and seriously damage the Serbian war machine. Time has proved that the sanctions needed to be accompanied by other, simultaneous, measures of pressure.

We think that a convincing example should be set for everybody, demonstrating that the reaction and the stand of the United Nations will always be the same in cases of aggression. It is the Organization's duty to use all means at its disposal to implement the principles of the Charter, to make peace, and to fulfil the hopes of mankind.

But we understand that the United Nations sanctions, as the only means based on the world community's consensus, will continue to be applied, putting the necessary pressure on the Belgrade authorities until a final solution of the whole Yugoslav crisis is found, including an overall improvement of the situation in Kosovo.

The Yugoslav crisis is multidimensional and complicated because of many interlacing factors and interests. It is evident that its most tragic and bloodiest manifestation is the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which for more than a year has been the centre of the attention and the efforts of public opinion and of the diplomacy of the major Powers of the world. I would like

to stress that my country has condemned the Serbian aggression, and has hailed and unreservedly supported all the endeavours of the international community to establish peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Republic of Albania will support any solution to the Bosnian conflict which is based on a free and fair agreement. Solutions which legalize territorial annexation and "ethnic cleansing" at the expense of other peoples such as the Muslim population in Bosnia can hardly be heralds of peace.

Moreover, we would like to remind this important international forum that the other aspects of the Yugoslav crisis should not be neglected either, for these could have consequences of tragic proportions not only within the former Yugoslavia but also in the Balkans and beyond.

In that light, I would like to point out that the Albanian factor in the former Yugoslavia, especially the Kosovo issue, is of a crucial importance to finding an equitable and lasting solution to the crisis. Therefore, we insist that this problem has to be properly addressed. If, in assessing this factor, there is insistence on the rigid position that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia, that it is annexed to Serbia and that the Albanian people in the former Yugoslavia are a minority, then nothing will be achieved, but the idea of creating a "Greater Serbia" will be reconfirmed and legalized at the expense of other peoples.

We think that the breakup of the former Yugoslavia - which was also the cause of what is now called the Yugoslav crisis - puts the issue of succession in the former Yugoslav federation in an entirely new light: it brings up the question of considering the peoples' right of self-determination, and the expression of their free will as to their political status. If this means war, as some people think, then it is up to the United Nations and the Security Council to intervene and guarantee respect for the principles of the Charter. We firmly maintain that no forcible change of borders or territorial gains through aggression and "ethnic cleansing" will be recognized.

The choice is clear: if we want people to believe in the new world order, we must create all the legitimate international conditions needed to realize and defend their aspirations, by setting up an entirely new type of system of United Nations protection for defenceless countries and peoples.

As to the national question of the Albanians, we see its solution in the creation in the former Yugoslavia and all over the Balkans of a broad democratic space that would allow freedom of communication and freedom of movement among the more than 7 million Albanians who live, in territorial continuity, in that space. We are against territorial fragmentation and division, and the hermetic sealing of a single people within the borders of neighbouring countries.

I believe that I am also expressing the opinion of many countries represented here when I say that the outbreak of a conflict in Kosovo would be the start of a great tragedy. Albania expresses its profound gratitude to the international community for all the efforts it has made to prevent a spillover of the conflict to Kosovo and to support the denied rights of the Albanian people there. I also express my gratitude to the United Nations, which has clearly warned that any warlike act by Serbia in Kosovo will pose a threat to international peace and security. We highly appreciate this support and call for a serious commitment by the international community to take all the necessary urgent measures to prevent the Bosnian tragedy from recurring in Kosovo.

Albania has long made it clear that placing Kosovo under the control and protection of the United Nations is the only guaranteed way of preventing conflict and discouraging the silent "ethnic cleansing" that Serbia is practising there. It would also create a favourable climate for dialogue between the legitimate Albanian representatives of Kosovo and the Serbian authorities on the political status of the province and on any other issue linked with the question of succession to the former Yugoslavia.

Therefore, we reiterate our stand that only the United Nations, and primarily the Security Council, should expeditiously take the necessary measures to prevent conflict in that region.

At a time when the concept of using peace-keeping forces prior to a conflict has been consolidated in theory and has been put into practice, preventive deployment is fully justified in the case of Kosovo, because of the threat that the outbreak of an intra-Balkan armed conflict would pose to international peace and security.

We are profoundly concerned about the issue of Kosovo and the grave situation created there since the elimination of its autonomy in 1989 and its complete annexation and subjection to Serbian military and police authority, and we call for proper attention to the fact that a peaceful settlement of the Yugoslav crisis should cover the entire space of the former Yugoslavia and all its

aspects and problems. Any partial settlement without the necessary international safeguards would be unstable and would not do away with the germs of new conflicts.

To sum up, I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Albania sees in the United Nations an organization capable of implementing the principles of its Charter and coping with all the challenges that result from the dynamic developments of our time, especially serious problems in the fields of security, disarmament, sustainable socio-economic development, environment and so on.

We see the United Nations also as the primary institution responsible for the collective safeguarding of peace and security in the new era. Albania will render unreserved support to all initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency of this universal Organization.

The meeting rose at 8.45 p.m.